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POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

EXTRACTS FROM HOXHA WORK

'LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF
THE NEW ALBANIA'

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EAST EUROPE REPORT

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

EXTRACTS FROM HOXHA WORK 'LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW ALBANIA'

Tirana ATA in English 0730 GMT 14 Nov-21 Nov 84

["Extracts" from Enver Hoxha's Memoirs: "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania"]

[14 Nov 84]

[Text] Part I

The monolithic unity of the Albanian people, embodied in the organisation of the democratic front-one of the most monumental works of the epoch of the party.

--Since its foundation the CPA pitched immediately into action to make the entire people conscious of and unite them in struggle against the occupiers.

Tirana, 14 November (ATA)--At the beginning of his book, "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania (Memoirs and Historical Notes)," Comrade Enver Hoxha speaks about the rich patriotic traditions of the Albanian people through centuries, about their readiness to be united in the struggle against the occupiers, these lofty virtues of patriotism became a great inspiration for the communists and the entire people to be united as a single body in the struggle for the liberation of the homeland from the foreign occupiers and the local traitors, Comrade Enver Hoxha speaks about the great work done by the Albanian communists after the founding of the party to strengthen the unity in the fold of the people, the links of the party with the masses, both in the town and countryside etc.

--Through all the centuries of their history, the Albanian people have always striven and fought to be united in the face of any invasion which threatened their freedom and the motherland.

Through all the centuries of their history, the Albanian people have always striven and fought to be united in the face of any invasion which threatened their freedom and the motherland writes Comrade Enver Hoxha in his book. This tradition was handed down from generation to generation as a great lesson and legacy, and precisely herein must seek one of the sources of the vitality of our people, of their ability to withstand the most ferocious and powerful

enemies and occupiers and to avoid assimilation by them. Now, at the grave moments through which the homeland was passing, facing dangers which threatened its existence, we communists would undoubtedly base ourselves firmly on the rich patriotic and fighting traditions of our people, on their tendency and readiness to unite in the fight for freedom. The examples of the Skanderbeg era, of the efforts of the outstanding men of our renaissance, of the famous Albanian League of Prizren, and the popular general uprising which brought Albania its independence, and so on, were to inspire not only us communists, but also all the honest, patriotic people to whom the fate of the homeland was dear.

Apart from this, there was something else which was to assist us in the great mission ahead of us.

For some years, the idea and appeal of the communist international for the creation of the anti-fascist front everywhere had been one of the topics of the debates and the main concern of the best communists in Albania at the time of the communist groups.

Further on Comrade Enver Hoxha speaks about the activity of the communist groups, such as that of Korca, Shkodra, etc about the splitting up that existed between them and continues further:

The fascist occupation of the country in April 1939 shook this grave and harmful situation of our communist movement to its foundations, immediately we sensed and understood better than ever that we would not be able to organize the resistance to the occupier properly, because we ourselves were still divided, without an organization and a clear revolutionary program, and were still unknown to the masses and had not won them to our cause to the degree that they would follow us consciously. It was essential to overcome these weaknesses in a revolutionary way as a decisive condition both to form our Communist Party and in order to get closer to and link up with the masses.

In the new situation which was created after the occupation, the Albanian communists of that period, especially the rank and file of the groups, understood these tasks correctly and, parallel with the efforts for the formation of the party, also increased and intensified their efforts to make themselves known to and link up with the masses.

Personally, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, I retain the finest and most unforgettable memories from this phase, especially after I came to work in Tirana in January 1940. The daily relations with the workers of the Flora factory and, even more, the direct work in the Flora shop, with the great possibilities for contact with elements of the most varied strata, brought about that very quickly we were to establish around ourselves a broad circle of worker activists and sympathizers. By getting closer to them, through ceaseless cautious work, we gradually extended the circle with other worker comrades, with craftsmen, the unemployed and the circle of their families and relatives. While the relations of our common or similar jobs served as a means to get to know them, the basis for the strengthening of this acquaintance was the political conversations against the occupiers which we, seemingly by chance, opened up with

them whenever the possibility presented itself. Of course, there were dangers in opening up these conversations and going deeply into them, especially with new acquaintances, but one fact remains significant and unforgettable for me: On almost no occasion did I, or the other comrades of the group who were working in Tirana, encounter any opposition or fear on the part of the worker comrades about the things we said to them. On the contrary, as soon as we broached the subject, it was they who found the opportunity to express their profound anger and hatred against the usurpers of the freedom and independence of their homeland, it was they who, with their class logic, were not content merely to express their hatred but also asked: What are we going to do about it?

This was the situation throughout the country, at that period I had to travel to many towns and worker centers, such as Durrës, Shkodra, Korça, Vlora, Fier, Gjirokastra, Kucova, etc, and everywhere the mounting hatred and readiness of the Albanian working men to fight against the occupation and the exploitation by the Italian fascists could be seen clearly. In the meetings which we held, the other comrades of our communist group reported the same situation, the outstanding militants of the communist group of Shkodra, Vasil Shanto and Qemal Stafa, with whom, beginning from the summer of 1940, we became closely associated and formed an unbreakable friendship, also had the same assessment of the situation in the country.

Although not with the same dimensions and intensity of work as in the city, as early as this phase we began to go to the countryside, too, and saw clearly that the same situation as in the ranks of the workers, apprentices and the unemployed of the cities was simmering there, too.

As for the youth, especially the school and student youth, it must be said that they were completely ready to follow the communists in any action and activity. Their ardent feelings of patriotism, badly hurt by the state of occupation, had made our youth unrestrainable in their open opposition and protests which they expressed almost every day in their mass resistance to the italianization and fascistization of the school, in their demonstrative refusal to give the fascist salute, in their boycott of the lessons in the fascist doctrine, the Italian language, the corrupting organizations and associations which the fascists tried to create, and so on.

Thus, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, proceeding from the idea of the indispensable need for an antifascist popular front (which later, when it was created, took its official name the National Liberation Front), and from the profound conviction that the achievement of it was completely possible, the Albanian communists had begun the work in this direction immediately after the fascist occupation. In undertaking this heavy burden we were aware of our lack of experience in connection with the tasks and practical construction of this front and its organizational forms, but we were firmly convinced that in the course of the work and struggle, especially after the founding of the party, we would gain experience and practice would suggest to us the appropriate forms.

Naturally, throughout this whole phase we encountered many anti-Marxist concepts and distorted ideas about the anti-fascist front and the possibility of forming it in Albania.

Comrade Enver Hoxha mentions the debate he had about this problem with a comrade of the group of Shkodra, who declared: The anti-fascist popular front cannot be created in Albania.

Why? I asked in astonishment, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

Because there are not political parties in our country as there are in France, Italy and elsewhere. With whom will talks be held? With whom will the agreement for the formation of the front be reached when there are no parties:

You're wrong. I told him. According to what you say, efforts should not be made in our country, the masses should not be mobilized in a fighting unity for the overthrow of fascism.

This is something specific to our country which comes from its backwardness, said the comrade in a tone of regret. Turkey and Zog have left us in this plight. If there were different parties, each of them would have its influence among the masses, the parties would talk about the front and, when they reached agreement, the masses would automatically join the front.

Well then, I asked him patiently, in your opinion under whose influence are the masses in our country?

Under no ones influence, he replied brashly.

No, you are judging things wrongly, proceeding from a wrong evaluation of the parties, the front and the masses. True, in Albania the masses are not under the influence of any party, but don't forget that at this moment, especially, they are under the influence of hatred for the occupier, under the influence of the desire to fight for freedom, under the influence of their profound patriotism. This is precisely what we must grasp. Indeed, I think it is not a misfortune but a great blessing that there have not been and there are no organized political parties in our country, the true front the steel front, is that which is created from below, through direct work with the masses, by linking up with them, by seizing on their seething hatred for fascism and their desire and readiness to fight.

Hence, the formation of the party found us Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses in a situation when all the objective and subjective possibilities for the formation of the anti-fascist front were in existence. What was most important was the fact that in the ranks of the communists and cadres of our newly formed party, as a result of the earlier work and the analyses made at the founding meeting of the party, the conviction was being implanted that our party could and must create the anti-fascist front of the Albanian people through direct concrete work with the masses, without waiting for and without seeking agreements and machinations with the self-styled leaders that is, as a front formed from below.

This unity of the masses, under the leadership and banner of the party, would make possible the outbreaks successful accomplishment of the revolution, for which the conditions existed in Albania.

--The grave, difficult but glorious historic task devolved on our Communist Party: To raise the people in revolution, lead them in struggle for the liberation of the homeland.

The feudal regime of Zog, with its oppression, poverty, hunger, imprisonments and thefts, had angered, enraged and filled the people with hatred for that regime, bringing them to the point of revolt. Precisely when this revolt and anger of the masses was seething, the occupation of the country prepared by Zog and the feudal bourgeoisie filled the cup to overflowing. Now the hatred of the people and the antagonistic struggle between oppressors and oppressed reached its culmination. Thus, the occupation of Albania by Italian fascism had marked the beginning of a change of national importance. This situation had to be understood and handled correctly, because it was pregnant with revolution. The Albanian communists and their party understood this state of affairs precisely and decided to emerge as masters of the situation and become the leaders of the revolution. Hence, the grave, difficult, but glorious historic task devolved on our Communist Party: To raise the people in revolution, lead them in struggle for the liberation of the homeland and take them and the working class, of which it was the vanguard, to victory.

Lenin teaches us that the revolution is a most serious question for the fate of a people. Therefore, if you begin it, you must carry it through to the end.

If the people are not aroused in struggle against the [word indistinct] bourgeois capitalist rulers and exploiters, if the people are not prepared politically against those whom they have to fight and overthrow, if in the course of this preparation the relative strength of the forces in action is not studied and analysed, there can be no revolution, in such instances there may be attempts, there may be resistance, which would be chaotic and temporary, but not revolution and no achievement of the objectives which a revolution seeks, whether it be a peasant uprising, a bourgeois-democratic revolution, or a proletarian revolution.

Every revolution must have a programmatic platform which indicates the masses the limits that must be reached and the reasons why one situation must be changed into another situation. Finally, after analysing all these things, it must be made clear that this change, this decisive turning-point, cannot be achieved except through armed insurrection, through revolution.

After he took his step against Albania in April 1939, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, Mussolini hoped and was convinced that everything would go off just as he had planned. But the opposite occurred. None of his preparations was able to deceive or to subdue the Albanian people. At no time had history known Albania and its people to accept enslavement by foreigners. It had known only the ceaseless wars of the Albanian people against foreign invaders.

There was no doubt that this is what would occur this time, too, but this had to be made a reality. The struggle had to be organized. It was not easy, but neither was it impossible. However, it would be a savage war. For its determination and patriotism and the great aim of liberation, this war would

be like the previous liberation wars of our people, but it would be unlike them from the stand-point of its strategy, tactics, dimensions and organisation. The times in which we were organizing the war were no longer those of our fathers and forefathers: We were facing the same savage, criminal enemies, refined in ideology, in politics, in methods and activities, but also armed to the teeth with the most modern weapons, destructive and harmful in every direction which had not been seen in former times.

Our party was clear about the broad outlines of the situation and, together with the people, went into the fight not unprepared, because from 7 April 1939 until 8 November 1941, a little more than 2 years had passed since the passive and active resistance against the occupiers and the Albanian quislings had begun.

After the occupation of the country the resistance of the people, and first of all, of the working class and peasantry, against the regime of Zog became more crystallized and assumed more advanced forms. The hostility and resistance of the Albanian working people and peasantry to the regime of Zog, now combined with the sentiment of national liberation, were the basis on which the party and its leadership relied in order to mobilize the will of the nation, the strength of the people, their opinions, aspirations and desires, in a fighting unity for the liberation of the homeland and the people.

The people Comrade Enver Hoxha writes had to be convinced with facts, through actions, through policy and through propaganda, that the valour, the daring, the patriotism and the clear political thinking of the Albanians, of our ancestors, had not died out, but were more fiery than ever. And the Communist Party of Albania, which was the bearer of all these outstanding virtues of our people, would launch thunderbolts upon the occupying enemies.

At the same time, the national liberation war, which the party undertook to lead, had to have clear aims, a program acceptable to our people, a program which would mobilize and enliven healthy energies.

Through its program, the party had to make clear to the people that this would be a great, fierce, complicated and difficult war. Therefore, great political and military organization was necessary. All this the party made clear to the people and it told them (just as it demonstrated in deeds) that the communists would be in the forefront of the fight, would be the first to hurl themselves into the flames, would give their lives fighting but the war could not be waged only by them, without the masses.

This resulted from the idea that the communists could not fight and triumph without the people. The people make the revolution.

--The question of alliances and the definition of the allies-decisive in the activity of the party.

In all this activity, the question of alliances and the definition of allies would be decisive, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses further on in the book. This leading role of the working class, on the basis of our main principles, and

the alliance of the working class with the friendly class-the peasantry, especially with the poor peasants with no land or little land, is known, precisely this alliance, to which we devoted the greatest importance and attention, was to be the key to the victory in our national liberation war.

However, we also knew the other side of it: This alliance of the working class with the peasantry, under the leadership of the working class which was to become the pivot of the unification of other patriotic and progressive strata, had to be created in accord with our concrete conditions and situation, and to this end, our party had to make analyses not only of the political economic situation of classes and strata, but also of the specific, special links of groups and clans, of the positive and negative influences, old and new, within Albanian society.

We reorganized the truth that the Albanian working class was still few in numbers and without great experience in the class struggle, but right from the outset we were convinced that this working class was and would be the first to embrace the call and program of the party and would pay, just as it did, the great role which belonged to it in the popular revolution as the vanguard class of the society. Its most faithful ally undoubtedly would be the peasantry which not only suffered under a medieval exploitation, but had always been the source of liberation and social struggle in the past. The fact that in the conditions of our country, this class would be the greatest source and the broadest base of manpower for the national liberation war made our work to win the support of the peasantry for the program of the party even more necessary.

So, while we were conscious that the working class and the peasantry would constitute the main basis of the fighting unity of the people, at the same time, we knew that the past had left its mark on our society blemishes which were obstacles to unity and made the creation of alliance difficult. Religion had done its work and continued to poison the minds and hearts of individuals. The clergy, the beys and bayraktars had striven not only to exploit but also to subdue and tame our brave and indomitable people, whom the regimes of the past had kept in cultural and political obscurantism.

True, when the country was occupied there were no parties, either reactionary or progressive, leftist, etc, but the factors which I listed above, and many others like these, operated as if there were innumerable parties which shrivelled the energies of the people and kept them divided in order to be enslaved and exploited more completely.

Another danger which threatened the struggle and fighting alliance of the people was that section of political emigrants, sons and representatives of oppressing and exploiting classes who, like scores of revolutionary patriots and democrats, had gone abroad when Zog came to power, but unlike the true patriots and democrats, had never been linked with the troubles of the homeland and the people. They remained abroad for 15 years and the majority of them degenerated completely politically, becoming the trusted men, allies and agents of that foreign power which fed and paid them. They posed as anti-Zogites, but were also anti-communists, and they returned to Albania together with the Italians in 1939. Their pretensions that they should govern the country were

categorical. They were completely divorced from the life, opinions and aspirations of the people. They thought that the outdated ideas of corrupted bourgeois democracy, which they nurtured, were appropriate to the time and applicable to the country. And when? After the world had undergone such great changes.

These elements, together with the fascist, called the Communist Party of Albania a party of foreigners and not of Albanians, a party of Slavs, Russians, etc, and not of Albanians. They described the National Liberation War as a crazy war, without prospects and harmful to Albania. They said that the leaders of the Communist Party of Albania and the anti-fascist war were hotheaded youths who do not know how to conduct politics, and spread a thousand other slanderous rumours.

This was the situation at the time amongst this collection of individuals, a situation which the Communist Party of Albania and its leadership studied many times both during 1942 and later.

During this period Comrade Enver Hoxha writes the party also had to carry out a similar study in regard to religious beliefs in Albania. We analysed the religious beliefs in two directions: The concrete influence of religion among the broad masses of the people, and the danger from the religious hierarchy. I shall not go into these analyses at length, but it is necessary to define certain main features on which the Central Committee of the CPA based itself in its work with the masses immediately after the founding of the party and through the whole period of the war.

It is known that there were three religious beliefs in our country: The Muslim faith, which was the most widespread, the Orthodox Christian faith, which ranked second, and the Roman Catholic faith, less widespread, was centered in Shkodra and extended to the highlands of Shkodra, to Lezha and down to Durres, where there was a bishopric. In Albania there were also some Muslim believers included in minor sects. Without influence among the people, with the exception of the Bektashi sect.

In regard to the clergy, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes their influence was as follows: The Catholic priests, irrespective of their various orders, such as Jesuits, Franciscans, etc, were men without a homeland who depended on the Vatican even for the smallest thing. In Albania, as in other countries of the Catholic world, the Catholic Church had the same pyramid organization, the same organization of churches, parishes, monasteries, religious or state schools, the same rites and liturgy, the same method and style of work in general. Their incomes, their salaries and everything else came from their plunder of the believers in the forms of donations, or even through compelling their believers to bequeath their liquid and fixed assets to the church.

All the clergymen of the Catholic church, from the upper one down to the deacons and parish priests, were learned people who had gone through theological schools with iron discipline, had learned the methods and tricks of suppressing the will of people through the fear of God, Christ and the Apostles. The Catholic Church and its clergy were extremely obscurantist

and conservative, as well as adaptable and flexible when necessary, but always in alliance with the reactionary regime like those of Prince Wied and Zog, as well as with every foreign occupier of Albania, including the Austro-Hungarians, the Italian fascists and the German Nazis. This was the situation in the hierarchy of the Catholic faith and its believers in this historical period. The senior priests were double agents of the Vatican and the Italian occupiers. For us, however, for the National Liberation War, there was a broad field, the people of the north, the Catholic laity. There were also some poor members of the lower clergy, who, following in the footsteps of outstanding figures of our national cause and culture such as Bundi and Bogdani, Ndre Mjeda and Shtjefen Gjecovi, might now listen to what we had to say, because they lived closer to the suffering and problems of the people. In these directions we were to work and make progress.

The Muslim religion and its hierarchy were not a serious obstacle to the struggle against the Italian occupiers as the Catholic religion was. Even before the occupation of the country, but still more so after it, the hierarchy of the Muslim religion was weak, without any experience to worry us.

The situation was similar with the Orthodox Christian faith, too, both in the hierarchy of the church and among the believers.

Historically, a section of the orthodox priests, especially the simple priests in the villages and even some in the cities, those who lived close to the people, who after religious services laid aside their priests hats to take up the hoe or some other tool to do some work, have fought and striven both to gain the independence of the church and, especially, to introduce the Albanian language into the church services. It is self-evident that these efforts of theirs would run into opposition from the patriarchate of Constantinople and later, especially from the reactionary Greek Church, and it was by no means rare for the latter to commit monstrous crimes against patriotic priests who loved the people, the homeland and the Albanian language, who wanted the independence of the Albanian Church. Their efforts and aims in these directions, in the historical context, had great value and were expressions and components of the struggle for independence which was waged in all the Albanian territories. Our people honoured and respected these martyrs, not simply of the church but of the cause of Albania. They include Papa Kristo Negovani, Father Stath Melani, Dhimiter Misha, Papa Llambro Ballamaci and others who, like other outstanding patriots who strove for the Albanian language and school, Naum Veqilharxhi, Petro Nini Luarasi, Koto Hoxhi, Pandeli Sotiri and tens of others, were poisoned or murdered in the most barbarous ways by the Greek patriarchate.

The reasons for which the Greek clerical reaction acted in that way towards these patriots were astonishingly cynical. It murdered and eliminated them simply because these sons of Albanians proclaimed that they were Albanians, that they wanted Albanian spoken in the church just as in the homes, the streets, fields and the schools, murdered them because they defended the legitimate right of the people to their territories, in reality, however, behind the reasons and religious motives of the bishops lurked political motives and aims, the territorial ambitions of Greek chauvinists towards Albania. This anti-Albanian chauvinism was so unrestrained that it linked its terri-

torial pretensions with and based them on the extension of the orthodox religion. Their chauvinist blindness went so far that reactionary bishops did not want to see that the Orthodox religion extended not only to certain zones on the border of our territory with Greece (which include the villages of the Greek minority with about 20,000 inhabitants in the first year of the National Liberation War and about 50,000 inhabitants today), but this religion, like the Muslim religion, extended all over Albania, to precincts and regions of Gjirokastra, Saranda, Permet, Korca, Vlora, Tepelena, Fier, Lushnja, Berat, Elbasan, Durres, Tirana and so on. Precisely on the basis of this absurd logic, certain reactionary bishops of great-Greek chauvinism pretend that 400 thousand Albanian citizens, formerly linked with the orthodox religion, are Greeks, hence, were the religion to be the basis for determining the national identity of a people, according to this crazy logic of the chauvinist bishops, more than half of Albania would belong to Greece—a thing which the Greek chauvinists, the champions of greater Greece have always dreamed of and demanded. Precisely in favour of these dreams of occupation and annexation they had persecuted and murdered our honoured patriots, included patriotic priests and believers, who had risen, together with their brothers of the Muslim and Catholic religions, to defend the territorial integrity of Albania from the annexationist appetites of neighbouring chauvinists.

Hence, this close combination of the cause of the church and religion with the national cause, giving priority to the latter, had brought about that not only the laity of the orthodox faith but also most of the simple priests, were brought up and educated with the feeling of patriotism.

So, Comrade Enver Hoxha underlines the party had the question of religious beliefs at the centre of its attention during the whole period of the National Liberation War, but also after the war, because in order to arouse the people to fight for the liberation of the homeland and build a new Albania we had to avoid hurting their feelings.

In regard to the intelligentsia, extensive, qualified, differentiated work at various levels had to be done. In general the terrain of the work with the intellectuals was suitable. The exception to this were the top officials, who not only accepted fascism but also secured fine material gains from it. In general, cultured officials of this category were corrupted by all the regimes, were among the first who willingly enrolled in the Albanian fascist party set up by the occupiers.

However, generally speaking, the intelligentsia of our country was patriotic, anti-fascist, and opposed to the occupation of the country, therefore, the party was to give great importance to this stratum of the people, too, because by means of it, the patriotism of the boys and girls would become more and more tempered and encouraged.

Such wide-ranging and detailed analyses of situations, the ratio of forces, etc, were the fruit of debates which we held in the meetings of the leadership in meetings with comrades of the party in the capital or from the terrain. They were a great assistance in our day today and future work, because the first and indispensable thing in order to accomplish our tasks as communists,

that is, as leaders of the masses, was to orient ourselves correctly in that difficult situation of enslavement, terror, intrigues and spiritual and physical sufferings and hardships which had descended upon our people.

In speaking about these analyses and studies which the party carried out and on which it relied, it should never be thought that first we waited until these were carried out in complete and final form and then began the work with the masses, or that we charged working groups or mobilized specialists and experts to do them. No, the specialists, the working groups, were we ourselves, all the communists, from the rank-and-file members to the main leaders, who acquainted ourselves with and summed up the situation along with the concrete day-to-day work.

All of us, then, from the main leaders and cadres of the party to the ordinary members, set about this great task with determination. Now, after the founding of the party, the very situation in which we were obliged to live and fight helped us to enter more widely into contact with the working people.

The intensive propaganda, day by day, by word of mouth, with leaflets, communiques and appeals, was made clear, more credible and acceptable to the people, because the communists accompanied their words with deeds. They were propagandists and fighters at the same time, they attacked fascism and were pursued by fascism. This could not fail to make a profound impression on the masses. Our comrades in the cities fought, organized actions, acts of sabotage, executed enemies, at a time when the rifle fire of guerrilla units and partisan cetras was being heard increasingly everywhere. The hatred and fury of the fascists was unleashed upon the communists with greater savagery and, of course, the love and trust of the people was bound to be directed more and more each day towards us, the sons of the people, who called and worked for the creation of the patriotic unity of the whole people in the fight against fascism.

--The people were with the party.

In the work with the people, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on in the book, we felt at ease, saw ourselves on our home ground and spoke to them very simply and clearly: We are going to wage the war, in the course of the fighting we shall organize ourselves, will strengthen this organisation and, when we drive out the Italians or any other occupier, together with them we will get rid of all those traitors who prepared the occupation and who now oppress us, fight us, and are growing fat at our expense.

Thus, what we said settled into place like a well fitted stone and we felt that when any door of the people was opened to us, their hearts had been opened to us first, we were convinced that when everyone, known and unknown, sheltered and protected us, it meant that they, the thousands, the people, were with us, with the party.

The party devoted the greatest care and attention to this work which steadily increased. In every meeting of the cells as well as in the leading organs of the party, the work with the masses was a question which would be reported on and discussed, it figured on every agenda. If you look over the documents of

that period, which refer to the main meetings after the founding of the party, or the reports which we sought and information material which came to us from all the regional committees and from all parts of the country, you will see that the problem of linking up with the masses, to win the support of the masses, to unite them in a steel unity, was one of the main problems discussed. It was no accident for example, that the first, the most important meeting held after the founding of the party, the first consultative meeting of the activists of the CPA in April 1942, centered on the analysis of our work for establishing links with the masses of workers, peasants, the youth, the women and all to whom the question of the freedom and independence of the homeland was dear. Likewise, at the special conference of the party in June 1942, at other meetings at national level, too, as well as at the meetings of the regional committees, or the frequent meetings of the Central Committee, we had made it an inviolable rule to report one by one, without exception, on what we had done, what we had achieved, and what remained to be done for uniting the patriotic masses around the party in the fight for freedom. As a result of this wise, organized work which the party carried out, the fact is that the number of workers in the towns with some sort of industrial development who joined the party or were linked with it, increased continuously. In the direction of the countryside, too, results had been achieved and in a number of districts, especially in central and southern Albania, the peasantry expressed itself in favour of the line of the party and was displaying readiness to take up arms.

Right from the outset, the party devoted particular care especially to the work with the Albanian youth, who, with their inexhaustible energy, enthusiasm and vitality and lofty moral qualities, were to be the most active striking force in the war for liberation. Not fortuitously, on the initiative of the provisional Central Committee, a few days after the founding of the Communist Party of Albania, the organization of the communist youth was set up, and not fortuitously the party appointed one of its finest members, one of its most mature and glorious leaders, Qemal Stafa, to head it. The objective of the party in the work with the youth was to bring the youth as close as possible to the communist ideas and the party, to prepare them ideologically and politically and to organize them for resistance and war against the occupiers. We communists had set ourselves this great objective in the time when we militated in different groups, but now that we had formed the party, the work with the youth was placed on sounder and more scientific foundations. We took into account the fact that the youth also had its own class composition, that the youth lived among and came into contact with worker, peasant and intellectual families and, for this reason, they could and must become transmitters of the word of the party, agitators for its militant program.

Thus, the propaganda and organizational work of the party was finding wide support among the workers, craftsmen, the poor of cities, the peasants and the youth. With one sure step after another the anti-fascist patriotic unity of the masses was being created around the party.

--The differentiation of the patriots from the pseudopatriots.

Right from the outset, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses further on in the book our party correctly laid down that the whole people, all social classes and strata,

without distinction as to political, ideological, religious and other views, should be included in the war for the salvation of the country. The main thing which could and must unite these forces was the stand towards the foreign occupiers, the uncompromising war against them. This was the basis on which the anti-fascist National Liberation Front would be organized, a front in [words indistinct] rested in the freedom and the existence of Albania and the Albanian nation would take part. And in this context, a major, wide-ranging job, frequently extremely complicated and wearisome, was that which we had to do with the patriotic elements or those who posed as patriots, that is, with all those who at that time were called nationalists.

In the talks which we held with them, after we were convinced about their predisposition, we put forward our stand as communists and as a Communist Party. Our fundamental thesis was that in this grave situation for the homeland all Albanians had a common aim--the fight against the occupiers for the liberation of Albania. In the face of this imperative duty all the differences in ideological convictions and political sympathies, religious and regional differences had to take second place. This was the moment, we communists stressed, when we must reflect deeply on the words of the patriotic poet that the religion of the Albanian is Albania.

This was one of the most difficult tasks which the party and its members, from the leadership to the individual communists, had to do. Here I am not referring to the danger that threatened us in this work, the possibility of being spied upon or betrayed, or the probability of the introduction of some agent provocateur element into our ranks. Of course, these dangers existed, but what work could the communists and honest patriots do without danger? They had taken these dangers into account since they had entered the struggle against a savage, cruel and cunning enemy.

The greatest difficulties were in another direction, in which mere bravery did not count for much, but which required tact, political acumen, cool-headedness and prudence. The party comrades had to stand up to great tension, not only physical, but also nervous and psychological. We had to talk and quarrel for whole hours, time after time, with all kinds of blockheads who were not only unconvinced by our correct arguments which were as clear as the light of day, but also tried to convince us of the opposite with ridiculous arguments and pettifogging sophistry. Apart from other things, it took great patience and self-restraint to avoid telling these patriots bluntly, to hell with you. However, the work of the party and the cause of the war demanded something else. Sometimes a comrade would come to us seething with disgust to report about a meeting which he had had and ask us to relieve him of this task and seek our approval to brand this or that person as a traitor. No. We would tell him, the day will come when the cup is filled and then we shall do this, but meanwhile, carry on with the work, refute and expose his arguments and when you are convinced that he truly does not want to fight, then will give him up as hopeless.

In working with the nationalists, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues the party had in mind the strategic aims of the war it was leading, the major interests of the people and the homeland [sentence as received]. First of all, the party

proceeded from the view that the broader the mass participation was in the popular front the more furiously the war would be waged and the more certain the final victory would be. Then, it must not be forgotten that many of the known nationalists of that period had, to various degrees, a certain influence in different districts and cities of the country or among the circles of the intelligentsia. The incorporation in the front of tens and tens of outstanding patriots, known to the people for their progressive sentiments and democratic opinions and as anti-Zogite fighters, was a victory of the policy of the party, because these people, besides their contribution, their personal abilities and capacities, possessed great authority among the people, which they put at the disposal and in the service of the National Liberation War.

The struggle of the party to unmask such pseudopatriots as Lumo Skendo, Ali Kelcyra, Qazim Koculi and others, and to bring them out in their true colours, yielded similar results. Many of these individuals were neither stupid nor without influence. Some of them profited from the reputation of the families whose names they bore, some from the two or three shots they had fired in Vlora in 1920, some others from their stands, adopted in opposition to Zog or the momentary participation in the June revolution of 1924.

It would have been political short-sightedness to have turned the rifle on all of them as early as 1941, as some might think. This would have been harmful both to the war and to the party. This human ore had to undergo a process of selection and from it, apart from the filth which would be thrown aside, pure metal would emerge, and time and the war would do this sorting out. The line of the party was correct: The patriotic elements should be brought into the war and their influence amongst the masses used for the benefit of the war, the demagogues, the disguised tools of the occupiers, should be unmasked by asking them the question: Are you going to fight for Albania or not? And the people would see, as they did, who were true patriots and who pseudopatriots.

Further on Comrade Enver Hoxha writes: I shall not dwell at greater length on all the talks and debates which I had with these individuals, but I want to say that despite our efforts to convince them they were determined to follow their course just as we were determined to follow ours. We had wasted a lot of time and energy and lost our tempers with them. We had plenty of work to do and would do it even without them because we knew and saw that we had the people with us. Naturally in the future, too, we were to make efforts to turn these elements back to the right road of the peoples war against fascism, but we were always clearly aware that we did not base the fate of the war on them. Regardless of their decisions, the war had begun and was mounting day by day--let them sit and philosophize about their tactic of satisfying everybody. The honest patriots all over Albania were taking to arms. More importantly, the masses of the people, the workers and peasants, and especially the youth, were more and more openly expressing themselves in favour of the program of the Communist Party for war against the fascist occupier.

This, you might say, was the preparatory work in the direction of realizing our objective of forming a front of all honest Albanians. Of course, some time had still to pass until, on 16 September 1942, the National Liberation Front was established on a complete organizational and political basis, as a

militant union of the masses, which under the leadership of the Communist Party in Albania, was to accomplish the liberation of the homeland. Here I want to point out the importance of this first preparatory phase, when we laid the foundations of the front, because without this phase it would have been impossible to achieve the historic conference of Peza.

[15 Nov 84]

[Text] Part II

Our peoples power emerged from the barrel of partisan gun in struggle for the liberation of the country.

--The foundations of the new power were laid since in struggle. The national liberation councils constituted the embryo of this power. The party in the van of every revolutionary action of the masses urged.

Tirana, 15 November, (ATA)--In continuation of the memoirs and historical notes, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on in his book laying the foundations of the new Albania on the intensification of the armed struggle of the Albanian people far and wide the country, on the intensive preparations to hold the conference of Peza, on the holding of its proceedings as well as on the great echo aroused among the people by the important decisions of this conference, in which the foundations of the National Liberation Front and the peoples power were laid.

--Under the leadership of the party the monolithic unity of the people in the battle for the national liberation was becoming more and more a tangible reality.

The work of the party in all zones of the country to build up its ideological, political and organizational strength and to arouse the people in the war was yielding its fruits, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on. From political and demonstrative actions we were going over on a broader scale to the armed struggle and, especially in the spring and summer of 1942, a large number of partisan units and ceta were operating in different regions of the country. Thus under the leadership of the party the monolithic unity of the people in the battle for national liberation was becoming an ever more tangible reality. The provisional Central Committee, which was attentively following the situation and the war which was developing gradually, arrived at the logical deduction that we were passing into a more developed situation with broader horizons, therefore it was concluded that, along with the organization and extension of the National Liberation War, the time had come to consider the political organization of this war.

Thus the many tasks for the unification of the masses, for the organization and extension of the National Liberation War and the prospects of the development of the revolution made it indispensable that in the course of the war, the new state power, the peoples state power, which would have nothing in common with the state power of the feudals and the bourgeoisie, should be set up. The concrete forms in which this state power was realized would be created gradually, but right from the outset the party was clear about one thing: Its social basis would be the broad popular masses.

As everyone knows, the foundations of the peoples state power were laid during the war with the national liberation councils, which were a new form that the party used as the most suitable for our country. It was an old tradition of our villages and regions that, in the absence of a centralized political power, the more important problems of the life of the village should be thrashed out in popular assemblies and the decisions which were taken there became law. We find this form of popular self-government realized in the major [word indistinct] of our history, when on the [word indistinct] of outstanding patriots, great conventions were summoned for the defence of the homeland. The Assembly of Lezha, the Albanian League of Prizren, the Assembly of Gerce, the Congress of Lushnja, etc, to which the people sent their own representatives to solve the problems and to defend their land and freedom from the aims of imperialists and the greed of chauvinists, were of this type.

Now we had to emply his sound popular tradition while, of course, enriching it in content and form in accord with the tasks of the war and the future.

The provisional Central Committee issued the instruction for the setting up of councils, for the first time, in February 1942. I remember that the comrades and I discussed this problem at length, especially to define the tasks that that these councils were to carry out and the way in which they would be formed. Of course, such discussions were natural, because none of us had either experienced or even the necessary knowledge in connection with the functions and prerogatives of organs of state power. Nevertheless we proceeded cautiously in this direction, and determined those functions in conformity with the needs of the war and the real possibilities which these councils would have in that period. A fundamental and very important thing in the directive of the Central Committee was that these councils were described explicitly as the embryo of the new state power. For the first time in the history of our people, the liberation war was combined with the struggle for the establishment of a new political power after the victory. This is due solely to the correct leadership of our Marxist-Leninist Party, thanks to which the National Liberation War assumed the character of a popular, democratic revolution.

The leaders of the party organizations in the terrain in particular were instructed that the members of these councils should be supporters and activists in the war for freedom in words and deeds. Those who had won the love and respect of the people, initially, these councils were to serve to rally the masses to the war against the occupiers, would provide volunteers for the partisan ceta, would administer justice and maintain order among the people in the liberated zones, would organize propaganda and the collection of aid for the national liberation movement, and so on. The work began quickly in this direction, too, and in certain districts of the country, especially in the south, the first councils began to be set up in the liberated zones.

All of these successes which we were achieving step by step were having ever greater influence in the life of the country and seriously disturbing the security and calm which the occupiers proclaimed.

While the communists and the Albanian people rejoiced over these successes, over the correct and reliable course which the National Liberation war was taking under the leadership of the CPA, those of the ilk of the self-styled fathers of the nation reacted quite differently. Since they were rabid anti-communists, the herd of patriots, democrats, anti-Zogites and anti-Italians, who, in fact, were all subsidized from Jacomonis treasury were infuriated and seriously shocked by the direction which events were taking.

To their astonishment and terror, precisely those children whom up till yesterday they had underrated and labelled with all sorts of epithets, were really taking over the leadership of the war, winning the support of and uniting the people around their program. Were events to continue in this way there was the danger that they would be left biting their fingernails. Therefore, the moment came when precisely those who, up till yesterday had left nothing unsaid against us and disdained us, scenting which way the political breeze was blowing and on the orders of Jacomoni, were obliged to make approaches to us, of course, with their haughtily politeness, seeking to meet us children in order to consult with us and to find a common language.

We, of course, on the basis of the defined line and platform of the party, did not refuse to meet and talk with them, although we were convinced, and became even more convinced, that their aim was not to reach agreement to collaborate in the war against fascism, but to find a common language with us, that is, to divert us from the course on which we had set out and to integrate us into their own capitulationist and collaborationist policy.

The party, with its policy of differentiation in the ranks of the feudo-bourgeoisie, exposes and warns the reactionary and enemy element of the people and of the cause of the revolution. In a talk with Fazlli Bey Frasheri, Comrade Enver Hoxha says to him among the other things: We have complete confidence in the unity of the people who have always risen in struggle against foreign invaders. The feudal lords, the beys, the merchants and the spies have always divided the people, and now they are trying to play the same game, but now the Albanian people have their own trustworthy leader, the Communist Party. You do not want the people to have this leadership so that they will not rise in insurrection and will not know which way to go. Without the Communist Party there is no struggle and without struggle there is no Communist Party. Mr Fazlli, I continued, our Communist Party is at war to the death with the fascist Italy and its collaborators. For the Italian fascists we have only rifles and bombs, there is no diplomacy and compromise with them. Time after time, we have called on you and your friends to join forces with us in the fight against fascism, but you want to play politics with them. Hence, we are not in agreement, we are divided on the main thing, on the basic issue. Now we consider it necessary to warn you:

The first course: You should unite with us in the war against the occupiers and traitors, and when I say unite, I mean not with deception and trickery, as you have done up till now, but in fact, you must take this seriously, and don't think for one moment that you will be able to deceive us. This is of course of honour, the only patriotic course which our forefathers have taught us.

The second course is to sit idle, to remain neutral, neither with us nor with the Italians. This is not an honourable course, not in the least patriotic, and it is hard to maintain such a stand in these times when the whole world is ablaze and our people are fighting. Only comrades take this stand.

The third course is that of betrayal, of secret or open collaboration with the occupiers against the people who are fighting. The traitors can put on any kind of mask, but we shall tear it from them. Treachery will be mercilessly crushed by the strength of the people.

The Communist Party of Albania has chosen the first course and it could not do otherwise.

Meanwhile, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, we pressed on vigorously with the work for the extension and strengthening of links with the broad masses of town and countryside, with intellectuals and patriots of all ages, and the truth is that this main and most important sector of work was also the most successful for us.

At a meeting organised in June 1942, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses that the broad masses of the people, the patriots, must be organised, must have a unified political and military leadership, so that the national liberation or popular front, what it will be called is not very important, should be embodied concretely in certain organisational forms of its own.

Concerning the hasty proposal by one of the participants to create a leading staff and announce it through a proclamation, Comrade Enver Hoxha replied that we must not be hasty in this matter. We have no need for leading staffs on paper. My idea is that we should organise a meeting with representatives of our party, as the only party in our country, and various patriots and there we should decide how and when it should be done, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha, who continues.

In fact this idea had been hammering away in my brain for some time and in one way or the other I had already presented it to the comrades. I was convinced, Comrade continues, and time confirmed this, that it was up to our Communist Party, after the work which it had done for about 6 to 7 months, to take the initiative to embody the union of the Albanian people politically and organizationally in concrete forms. I talked it over with other comrades whom I met during those days and we decided that we should discuss it more extensively in a regular meeting of the Central Committee, define the measures which had to be taken about the content of the meeting and decide where and when it would be held.

Immediately after this, we issued the instruction that the contacts and work which the comrades would carry out with nationalists and other elements were to be directed towards the idea which the leadership of the party was developing in concrete forms for the organization of the meeting at which the political foundations of the unity of the Albanian people in the war against fascism would be laid. Special instructions were issued to the comrades in the districts

to collect, study and send us information about those elements whom it was thought might take part in such a meeting.

Many of these elements we did not trust, nevertheless we tried with them, because the aim was to organize a broad meeting at which all the strata and political forces which expressed their readiness to fight, would be represented. It was important that the organs which would emerge should have the broadest possible representative basis and the decisions operative force. Like all the comrades, I too, was engaged directly in the accomplishment of the new and important task which we undertook and, to this end, I went to Peza to meet Babe Myslim.

As on all other occasions, Myslim expressed his agreement and readiness to take part in the meeting which the Communist Party proposed. I asked Myslim for and he gave me recommendations for a number of people whom we could invite to the meeting and he expressed his readiness to talk with them himself, if we charged him with this task when the matter was finally decided. Among the first whom he mentioned were Haxhi Lleshi and Mustafa Xhani, who had long since expressed their agreement with the program of the party, therefore, I asked Myslim to put us in contact with them, and if possible, to bring them to Peza for a preliminary meeting with them.

Not long after this conversation, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha, Myslim sent me word that Haxhi Lleshi had arrived in Peza. The next day or the day after, I set out for Peza and arrived at Myslims house where Haxhi had stayed during those days.

Haxhi listened to me attentively, from time to time answering some questions I asked him. As I had expected, in his reply he once again expressed himself in favour of the program of the party for the war and approved the idea of a conference for the unification of the Albanian people in this war.

In response to my request, he also gave me an outline of the situation in Dibra, spoke about the various influences there, and stressed that despite the disruptive activity of the gentry, the bayraktars, the people of Dibra would soon begin an organized armed struggle. The judgements and precise information which Haxhi Lleshi gave me were of great assistance to our work. Amongst other things I asked Haxhi to recommend to us some of the nationalist elements whom he knew, in order to put us in contact with them so that we could try to involve them, too, in the war.

Haxhi Lleshi mentioned a number of names and spoke particularly about Mustafa Xhani.

We know Baba Faja, I told him, our comrades have talked with him, I am happy that you have the same opinion of him.

The case of this patriotic clergyman, Baba Faja, was not the only one. Later there were other clergymen who joined the National Liberation War heart and soul and fought in it. The activities of Mustafa Xhani had great propaganda importance among the people, because he showed the people that their religious

convictions are one thing, while being Albanian patriots is another thing. Regardless of whether you are a Muslim, orthodox or Catholic, your first duty is the war for the freedom of Albania, this is what Baba Faja told all Albanians through his personal fight. And this was completely in conformity with the line our Communist Party for the unity of the whole Albanian people in the war for freedom.

--In the wave of the preparatory work to organize the national conference of representatives of the Albanian people.

While the comrades all over the country, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha continued the work on the basis of the orientations and instructions which we had sent them, studying everything thoroughly with communist coolheadedness, the leadership of the party decided that it should hold a special meeting to analyze the results achieved and define the tasks and concrete measures for the organization of the National Conference of Representatives of the Albanian People. At this meeting, we put forward the idea and thrashed out opinions about the organization of the national conference which would officially decide on the unification of the Albanian people in a militant organization which would be the National Liberation Front. To this end, I presented to the comrades at the meeting a summary comprising a number of points outlining the political platform with which the Communist Party of Albania would go to the conference as its initiator, about the necessity of having a carefully considered and extremely precise program, as well as about the measures which we would have to take [and] ensure that the conference was conducted normally.

There are two things that we have to bear in mind, I pointed out to the comrades, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha, first, we are going to present the platform, our program, to the conference, but in fact we are presenting it to the people, and they will approve it, two or three individuals won't like this but that doesn't matter. Second, I continued, to those who may raise the question of the future regime in Albania we shall say that the people themselves will decide this after liberation, through regular democratic elections, besides this, I stressed, we must go to the conference as a party and not as individuals, with a delegation which we shall appoint jointly while the others will be nationalists who are already fighting, or whom we think we can persuade to fight in the future. Representatives of the communist youth and the anti-fascist women will also go to the conference.

Immediately after this we set to work preparing for the organization of the conference. We were aware that the conference for which we were working would be a major event of historic importance, a concretization of the Marxist-Leninist line of the Communist Party of Albania. The repercussions of it would be incalculable.

At the July meeting continues Comrade Enver Hoxha, we had decided to seek the agreement of patriots and nationalists to participate in the conference and would present to them a general outline of its purpose, in order to enable them to prepare themselves to speak, but for security reasons we would tell them neither the day nor the place. The meeting had to be a broad one, not in the numerical sense, however, because for reasons of secrecy a meeting with 50 or a hundred people would not be suitable, but in the sense of its breaths of representation. It was important that the participants should be men with weight and influence among the people, patriots who represented the country from the north to the south. The names of a number of outstanding patriots,

like Myslim Peza, Haxhi Lleshi and Mustafa Xhani, had long been on the list, and beside their names there was no question mark about their stand toward the National Liberation War and the Communist Party about the others we held continual discussions.

Comrade Enver Hoxha writes about the debates he had regarding the invitation to Abaz Kupi, his doubts about this person linked with intelligence service and continues.

Meanwhile, we had been sounding people out and we knew that Bazi and other pro-Zog elements had said that they would come.

Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on about the meeting he held with such elements as Skender Muco, Bahri Omari, Shen Karbunara, Kol Tromara, Sejfi Vllamasli, etc describes the debates with them and these are the conclusions he draws in regard to these persons: Nothing else could be expected from such elements. However, while these false patriots demanded time to think it over or found a thousand and one justifications to sabotage the unity of the people in their uncompromising war, the people themselves, together with the communists, did not waste time thinking the matter over or in academic discussions. The reality was showing with numerous examples that, under the leadership of the Communist Party, the armed struggle and the political organization of the masses were being raised to a higher level and one of the main links in the program of the party, the formation of the National Liberation Front, was being achieved. The moment had come to sanction its founding de jure.

--The conference of Peza--the first National Liberation Conference of the Albanian People.

The people, with the communists in the forefront, were writing glorious pages in their age-old history, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha. In Vlora, Skrapar, Kurvelesh, Elbasan, Permet, Dibra, Shkodra, Mat, and elsewhere actions were being carried out and units and ceta raised, in Tirana the women held a powerful demonstration, in which they clashed with the fascists, against the internment of their sons on the Italian islands, on 24 July 1942, the telephone and telegraph lines were cut, the peoples war was becoming a reality, just as the panic which had seized the enemy was becoming a reality.

During this period, together with the joy of victories we were also to feel great grief over the comrades who fell with honour on the field of battle. In Shkodra the history of Oso Kuka, was to be repeated by Perlat Rexhepi, Branko Kadia and Jordan Misja, while such communists as Myzafer Asqeri in Gjirokastra Teli Ndini in Vlora, Misto Mame and Mihal Duri in Tirana, were to raise the popular and partisan heroism to higher levels.

The reports about their heroic sacrifice found me in the heat of the work for the preparation of the conference of Peza. I overcome my grief and sat down again to prepare the report. The rumble of the war which the people, headed by the communists, had launched and which had to grow even stronger after the conference, must echo in every phrase of it Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, the time gave no one greater right than the communists to appeal to the people for merciless war against the enemy that had occupied the country, in the new

history which was being written with the blood of the finest sons of the people no one could emerge with greater pride and honour than the communists.

About the beginning of August I had completed the report which I was to deliver at the Conference of Peza.

In the first 10 days of September Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, the other comrades and I established ourselves in Peza and moved only when this became essential. There we had established a small printing press on which the materials that the conference approved, the resolution, an appeal, leaflet, or communique would be printed. Those were days full of tension, because although the measures had been taken in time, there were problems right up to the last moment. On the eve of the conference we also held a meeting of the Central Committee there, at which we discussed mainly the political event which we were organizing.

Those invited began to arrive after the first 10 days of September and by, the evening of the 15th the majority were there.

In Peza I had my first meeting with Baba Faja Martaneshi, who had come together with Haxhi Lleshi. Baba Faja's sincere face and quiet manner of speaking made an immediate impression on me.

The following morning, on 16 September 1942, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues further on the meeting which has gone down and will remain in history as the 1st National Liberation Conference of the Albanian people, or the Conference of Peza for short, commenced. For the whole Albanian people and for us communists, in particular, this was a red-letter day. The years which have passed since have not diminished the significance and historic importance of this event, but on the contrary the colossal value of this historic event stands out even more clearly from the heights to which the party has raised our beloved homeland.

We held the conference in a hall, or rather in a big room, (it could hardly be called a hall) in Babe (Myslim Peza's) house, with a table at the head and filled with chairs and forms. Inside, on the walls, they had hung our national flag and the portraits of heroes and outstanding figures in the history of our people, Skanderbeg, Ismail Qemali, Naim Frasheri, Luigj Gurakuqi, Bajram Curri and Avni Rusteni. All told 17 delegates took part in the conference. The delegation of the Communist Party of Albania was made up of Enver Hoxha, Ramadan Citaku, Ymer Dishnica, Koco Tashko and Mustafa Gjinishi, Nako Spiru represented the anti-fascist youth and Nexhmije Xhuglini the anti-fascist women at the conference. The nationalist youth were represented by Halim Begeja, who was also the delegate of the father of patriotism, Lumo Skendo, who did not come himself.

In opening the meeting on behalf of the delegation of the Communist Party which was the initiator of the conference, I thanked the delegates for their participation.

After a little discussion, I was given the floor to deliver the main report on the national liberation councils. Since this report has been lost I shall try to give a summary of the main points which were dealt with in it and which constituted the basic mobilizing principles which the party presented to the conference of the representatives of the Albanian people. Now these principles have become historic. The National Liberation War and life completely confirmed their correctness.

The main fundamental idea, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes which was presented by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania at the conference of Peza was the unification of the whole Albanian people and their organization in the war against the occupiers. This was the cardinal point which I, on behalf of the Central Committee, elaborated to the conference in the main report on the national liberation councils.

In particular I stressed in the report: These are tragic moments for the fate of the homeland and the people. Faced with the cruel reality of the fascist occupation the people must be united to a man, the things which might divide us in our ideological, religious and other beliefs must be put aside and we should mobilize and link ourselves with one another for a great cause: For the liberation of the homeland, for the salvation of the people as a formed nation in order to bar the way to the predatory aims of the enemies who, at all periods, have operated in order to split us up and to deny our existence as a nation. He who truly loves the people and wants to see the homeland free, independent and sovereign, must display this now, irrespective of his political convictions, religious beliefs or his region of origin.

The war against the Italian fascist invaders and their collaborators, the report stressed, is the only alternative for the true patriots. Any other course leads to national and individual captivity, enslavement and misery. The Italian enemy and the Quislings want to divide us, to split us, and their main aim is to isolate the Communist Party of Albania from the people and the war. For the enemy occupier this objective is decisive. For the liberation of the people and the homeland, however, the existence and fight of the Communist Party of Albania at the head of the people, who are fighting and resisting, is decisive.

When I reached this part of my report, I noticed that some of those present reacted by fidgeting or exchanging whispers. However, there was no reaction and I continued with the report with the aim of making things clear to those elements in whom the filthy anti-communist propaganda of the occupiers and Quisling might have taken root to one extent or another.

I went on Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, to deal with the problems of the concrete political and military organization of our war, saying in substance: Our war is a National Liberation War which has as its objective the complete liberation of the homeland and the establishment of a democratic regime, the form of which the people themselves will decide after liberation. Hence, our war will be a political and military war.

In order to achieve these two great objectives, it is necessary to organize the anti-fascist National Liberation Front, which will have national liberation councils all over the country and the partisan ceta, which are the armed forces of the National Liberation Front. Later we shall go on to form bigger units and will also set up the general staff. The anti-fascist National Liberation Front will be extended all over our country in the liberated and non-liberated zones and its activity will be accomplished through the national liberation councils. The national liberation councils, continued the report, will carry out the political and propaganda work, the mobilization of people for the war and for resistance, and will ensure material supplies of every sort for the ceta, while in liberated places and zones, in which the old oppressive state power will be liquidated to its foundations, these councils will be and will affirm themselves as the new peoples democratic state power, and in their form and content, will be nothing like either the feudal bourgeois state administration or the old councils of elders. In these will be councils with a new content and spirit, because those taking part in them will be men of the people, fighters from all strata and of all religious and political beliefs, provided only they are anti-fascists and fight against the occupiers.

I went to speak concretely about the organization and leadership of the partisan ceta which would be the embryo of the National Liberation Army of the Albanian people.

Among other things, I said: The Partisan ceta will be led by commanders who may be communists, non-party patriots, and at the same time by political commissars who must be communist, the decisions must be taken jointly by the commander and the commissar in complete harmony, in the relations between them and towards them there must not be any discrimination. The partisan ceta will fight under our national flag, under the flag of Skanderbeg, the flag which Ismail Qemali raised in Vlora. On their caps the partisans will wear the five-pointed red star which symbolizes a brilliant new era, which is being opened up to the homeland and our people.

In the report on the national liberation councils I also stressed as a main issue that the Communist Party of Albania, the only party in the country, leads the anti-fascist National Liberation Front and the doors of the front will be open to any person who wants to fight against the enemy and, who as an individual, considers the front his own, in which he can freely express his opinions and suggestions in favour of the National Liberation War.

As to the question of the admission of other parties to the front, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha, this was not raised at those moments, because no such parties existed. No other class, stratum, or political grouping had emerged with its own party or with any program for national liberation. And any organization which was created after the conference of Peza like the Balli Kombetar, was nothing but a creation of the fascist occupiers and other foreigners to hinder the liberation of the country.

In the report I dwelt in particular on the role and concrete tasks of the national liberation councils and on the practical organization of our work in order to intensify the setting up of the councils all over the country. After

reporting on the work which had been done up till that time and the results which had been achieved, amongst other things, I pointed out: The councils, which must be formed freely by the people, should be set up both in the liberated zones and in the zones not yet liberated. Of course, in the villages and towns which are in the hands of the enemy, it is impossible to hold open and broad elections, but we shall work to ensure that these secret elections have the broadest possible representation so that those who become members of the councils are precisely those persons whom the people know and want.

After I had delivered the report it was thrown open to discussion, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on Myslim strongly supported the theses of the party. Replying to the dodges of the nationalists who had no desire to commit themselves concretely to the war against the occupiers, we asked the question: When are we going to fight? We cannot wait any longer. Today there are only two courses: Either to fight against the occupier together with the people or to fight against the people, one thing is true: The people no longer trust those nationalists who appeal to us to wait.

Baba Faja Martaneshi, Haxhi Lleshi and others also took the same stand.

Apart from our comrades, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha, others present who, as time showed, had come to Peza with different aims, also spoke at the meeting. In general they expressed agreement with the report as well as with the war against the occupier, but by means of formal objections they tried to divert the conference from its concrete and militant decisions.

In their contributions to the discussion most of those present at the conference, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues enthusiastically approved the judgments and proposals of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania about the fundamental problems which were presented.

Even Abaz Kupa, the representative of the Zogite trend, and some others approved the platform of Peza, not because they liked it, but because they intended to disguise themselves in order to act, as they did in opposition to the front and the National Liberation War.

The question of the regime which would be established in Albania after the war was also raised at the conference. This was a delicate question although for the party the perspective was quite clear. The objective of the war of the Albanian people under the leadership of the Communist Party was not only the complete liberation of the homeland, but also the overthrow of any oppressive feudal-bourgeois regime. The people were not going to fight to clear the way for Zog or his lackeys, whether his friends or enemies. History was advancing, the people had awakened and their aspirations, which were represented by their finest sons and daughters, the communists and true patriots, were for an Albania free from any oppression, either external or internal.

Therefore, in the discussion of this question, I expressed the opinion of our party that we should proclaim the liberation of the country and the creation of democratic peoples Albania as the aim of the war. As to the form of the regime, let this be decided by the people after the war. Someone at the con-

ference advocated that we should proclaim a democratic republic as the form of the regime, but we, the representatives of the Communist Party, rejected this as inappropriate for the moment. The launching of such a slogan would not serve the unification of all the forces in the war and right from the outset would create a harmful and unnecessary opposition towards the front.

Even Abaz Kupa expressed his solidarity with our formulation. The discussion continued late into the night and on the following morning, after the conclusion of the discussion, Nexhmije Xhuglini, as secretary of the conference, read out the draft of the resolution which we had prepared in advance. There was no essential objection and the resolution was adopted. This document is published and well-known, therefore I shall not dwell on its content. Then we proceeded to the elections. The conference elected the provisional anti-fascist National Liberation Council composed of seven people. From the Communist Party of Albania, Enver Hoxha, Ymer Disknica and Mustafa Gjinishi were elected. Also elected as members of the council were Myslim Peza and from the nationalists Abaz Kupa, Ndoc Coka and Kamber Qafemolla (the latter in his absence).

In the organization of the conference everything went well.

--The Conference of Peza under the leadership of the Communist Party of Albania aroused confidence in the war and in victory.

So ended the conference of Peza, which sanctioned the formation of the militant organization of the Albanian people, the anti-fascist National Liberation Front. The very name of the anti-fascist National Liberation Front had a profound political and military meaning, those three words summed up the idea of the unity of the people. But why? In order to create a fighting front. The idea and the action dominated in the word front. This word expressed the sense of the mobilization of the active forces of the people organized in a fighting front, which required courage, heroism, policy, strategy and various tactics against a savage enemy. But for what war was this front created? The answer comes immediately: For the liberation of the nation. Hence, it was this National Liberation Front which would mobilize and rally to its ranks all those anti-fascist forces which were to fight to liberate the homeland. After this, our homeland would assume a new form, would have a new regime which the armed people themselves would decide, the people who, by fighting with arms and making great sacrifices, would have the right to determine the form of the regime which pleased them. Nobody else, no external or internal enemy, would be allowed or would be able to impose his will on the Albanian people. This situation which was being created was the glorious deed of the Communist Party of Albania, the leading role of which was affirmed at the Conference of Peza.

The conference had a colossal effect among the people, aroused hope and trust in the Communist Party of Albania, confidence in the war and in victory. Among the enemies it aroused anger, fear and terror. The organization and decisions of the conference were a heavy political and military slap in the face for them. Their positions in Albania were being shaken. After this, they would intensify the terror, the killings, the imprisonment of communists, patriots

and the people, would put villages and whole regions to the torch, would hatch up and apply new manoeuvres with the chiefs of Albanian reaction, the pseudo-patriots and pseudo-democrats. But all this was in vain. Now the war of the people under the leadership of the Communist Party would become fiercer and better organized, and step by step, would drive out the occupiers while the reactionary rubbish in the service of the occupiers would be tossed into the garbage bin of history.

The success which we achieved at the 1st anti-fascist national liberation conference of the Albanian people gave us heart, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha. A big stride forward had been taken towards achieving the final victory over the occupiers and the Quislings.

All the members of the council and the others who participated in the conference were instructed that, as soon as they returned to their towns and villages, they should begin the work to convey the spirit and decisions of the conference of Peza to the people, to discuss the resolution and to call for and lead the concrete work for the setting up of national liberation councils and partisan ceta and units. The people had to thoroughly understand the importance of the conference and be mobilized to apply the decisions taken at it. Apart from this, the comrades were instructed to increase their contacts with influential nationalist elements, to speak to them about the platform which we had approved and to appeal to them, on the basis of this platform, to unite with the whole Albanian people in the National Liberation War.

--The Party being in the leading position was indispensable in every revolutionary action of the masses.

Of course, the great success which we achieved at Peza, continues Comrade Enver Hoxha, the election of the National Liberation General Council, and the fact that it had commenced its work, in no way meant that from now on only the [word indistinct] would be engaged in and [word indistinct] of the front and the national liberation councils. Had we judged the matters in this way and acted accordingly, that is, had we considered our work for the front completed with what was achieved at Peza, and subsequently left everything in the hands of the General Council, this would have been one of the gravest and most fatal mistakes both for the fate of the cardinal issues of the war and people and for the fate of our Communist Party itself. This was not simply because in the composition of the council, apart from representatives of the Communist Party and some consistent true patriots, the rest were unreliable vacillating elements or united with us for long-term aims of sabotage. No, even if all the members of the General Council had been tested elements, genuine and consistent fighters, the work and role of the party would still have remained irreplaceable.

Only the Communist Party, with its correct line, its clear program, the militancy of all its members and its consistency in carrying things through to the end, would enable the general council to carry out its tasks and functions properly, the front to be extended and strengthened on the soundest possible foundations and the councils formed and functioning properly all over the country and, as a consequence, the war would be ceaselessly extended, assume the character of a true general peoples war and be crowned with success.

We were faced with many responsible tasks to ensure that this norm and maxim of Marxism-Leninism for the work of the Communist Party in the front was applied correctly and consistently in the concrete conditions of our country.

True, the Conference of Peza had affirmed the leading role of our party in the National Liberation War, but it should by no means be thought that after this everything had been finally settled. There were whole zones, especially in the north, in which our program and propaganda about the war had not penetrated to the proper extent and no results necessary for the unification and mobilization of the people had been achieved. Likewise, even where our successes were obvious there remained certain strata and groups which did not yet understand the role and the tasks which the moment required. Hence, we still had to work and struggle to ensure that the name of the party, the word and deeds of its members, were made known everywhere, penetrated everywhere and won the whole people over to our cause. Otherwise, without concrete struggle, without great and continuous efforts, the leading role cannot be won. That nobody will hand to you on a platter.

The party's being in the leading position was also essential for the prospects of the war which we were organizing with the broad participation of the masses of workers, peasants, the youth, women, patriots and others.

The basic and fundamental element which was to assure the masses of a new future, different from the past, was precisely the fact that the Communist Party was at the head of the front and the war, played its leading role there. On this issue we permitted no infringement or compromise, no agreement or attempt at sharing roles.

It should never be thought that this was something clear to all, and that it could be accomplished easily. On the contrary, the difficulties and obstacles were enormous, we faced attacks, accusations and pressures from all sides. Not only the fascists and their collaborators, Merlika and company, but many of those who still stood aloof, waiting for the day to come, made accusations against us, our party and our ideology, with all the anti-communist arsenal elaborated over the years. Especially after the victory we achieved at Peza, this campaign, anti-communist in principle and against the CPA in practice, assumed ferocious proportions.

It is obvious why this campaign was launched: Now our enemies were more than ever terrified by the fact that the CPA was becoming the main force which step by step was rallying the masses, the people, around itself and engaging them in the war. As a result of this anti-communist attack, there were even some of our own comrades (I am not talking about the pseudo-patriots who were completely of one mind with Merlika), who as a result of the anti-communist pressure of open and concealed reaction as well as of their own uncertainty, lack of formation or long-implanted opportunism, demanded that we should not proclaim the name and role of the Communist Party among the masses and in the front, because allegedly this brought us harm and alienated the people, especially the national [word indistinct] from us.

What do you think? I asked one of these elements. Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, should we hide the fact of the existence of our Communist Party, which is fighting, created the front and called and organized the conference of Peza and is in the forefront of the war?

In principle the Communist Party never hides its existence in any circumstances, otherwise, why was it formed, why should it? the party must keep its methods of organization, bases, internal documents, plans of actions and activities secret from the enemy, but never its existence, or its main slogans for a given phase and moment. Our main slogan at present is: War against the occupiers and traitors for the liberation of the country. There is absolutely no reason why we should hide the fact that we, the communists, were the first to launch this slogan and are adhering to and applying it consistently with the blood of our comrades. The fascists are terrified by this fighting slogan, the traitors shy away from it, but not the people or the true nationalists. Our next slogan is: Unity of the whole people in the anti-fascist front. And there is no reason why the people or the true nationalists should be frightened off by this slogan. On the contrary, it is precisely because we make this a primary slogan that the people like us and are rallying round us.

However, these are not the only reasons why we must proclaim the name and work of the party, I went on, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, look what filthy slanders and accusations reaction is pouring out against us and against communism in general. Were we to retreat, to hide ourselves, to remain silent, we would give the open and secret enemies the satisfaction of which they dream, while we would leave people who don't see things clearly at the mercy of the accusations of Mussolini and the Merlikas. Therefore, with all our forces and means we must do much more than hitherto to make clear to the people what communism is and what we, the communists, are, why we are fighting, what our stands are towards the homeland, the family, society and the present and future of the country.

At the same time we were being very careful to avoid and sternly attacked any manifestation of extremism or sectarianism, any excess in the tasks and slogans in the moments through which we were passing. Had we taken a soft stand towards the bearers of such views and actions, the consequences would have been bitter and the image and role of the party in particular, and the whole of its work with the masses in general would have been sabotage.

Comrade Enver Hoxha mentions one of these sabotaging acts of the secret enemies of the party. I was informed that two or three comrades of the Tirana organization, including such adventurers and factionists as Beaverbrook, Fiqret Sanxhaktari (the fiancée of the adventurer Agron Corati before she became engaged to and married Mehmet Shehu) and others, allegedly in order to gain the release from prison of a newly arrested comrade, kidnapped the young daughter of Man Kukaleshi, the commander of the Gendarmerie of Tirana, and sent the father a ransom note: The comrade or your daughter.

When they told me about this disgraceful business, I could not bring myself to believe that such a thing could cross the mind of any Albanian, let alone an Albanian communist. But the comrades verified the information immediately and assured me that the action had been carried out.

This is adventurism and terrorism, I shouted, jumping to my feet, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes the kidnapped child must be released immediately, while the terrorists must be tried by the party. At the very least they must be expelled from our ranks. This, if they have done this from stupidity or from political and ideological short-sightedness, but if they have acted from other motives (and here I had in mind the possibility of some trap or provocation), the judgment and sentence will be different.

As a result of our immediate intervention this ugly incident, the only one of its kind even in the history of our internal enemies (because this act could in no way sully the party) was avoided.

Hence, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues further on, we had to be always in action, vigilant and cautious in order to cope with the many problems of that period and to ensure that the image of our party among the people and its leading role were kept unsullied and increased in strength from day to day as a decisive condition for the unity of the people and their mobilization in the war.

True, we pointed out that the working class and the peasantry recognized the CPA as the party which expressed and championed [words indistinct] conscious, as early as those moments, about the role of the party or of the National Liberation Front. There was still a very great deal to be done to bring these classes closer to and activate them in the front and the war, and we were more than aware of this.

The months which followed the Conference of Peza, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues once again, confirmed the correctness of the line, the strategy and tactics of our young party. The results were obvious: The ranks of the party had been increased while day by day the broad masses of the people, the workers, peasants, the intellectuals, the patriots, the Albanian youth, were pouring into the National Liberation Front, the fighting organization which the party led.

Of course, such a situation disturbed the enemy occupier who was obliged to make desperate efforts to alter the situation in his favour. Apart from the changes of puppets in the Albanian Government and administration, apart from the stepping up of its military and police measures, a separate chapter in these efforts consisted of the total mobilization and rallying of reaction, especially that part which fascist Italy had permitted to remain in the second echelon up until that time. As the Communist Party realized clearly and history confirmed, the traitor nationalist organization, the Balli Kombetar, was to have its own main role in this. Our struggle with this grouping of reaction was to comprise another chapter in the heroic efforts of the party and the National Liberation Front of the Albanian people.

[16 Nov 84]

[Text] Part 3

The democratic front of Albania and our people's power were tempered through battles with numerous internal and external enemies.

Tirana, 16 November (ATA)--In continuation of the memoirs and historical notes in the book "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania" Comrade Enver Hoxha writes also on the activity organised by reaction to sabotage the cause of the uncompromising struggle against the occupiers. He writes also the creation of the treacherous organisation of Balli Kombetar, its actions to the detriment of the interests of the people and party, about the powerful denunciation of this anti-national organisation by the party, making the distinction between the misled and unaware element, etc, in the ranks of this organisation from the sworn enemy element of the party and people.

--"The nationalist" organisation of Balli Kombetar--and the enemy occupier.

At the moments when we were in the heat of the work to put into practice the decisions of the Conference of Peza, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on the book, especially in the month of November, a number of comrades from Tirana and other districts reported to us about many movements, meetings and contacts of certain "nationalist" chiefs, prominent amongst whom was Mithat Frasheri, we were certain that something was being prepared and issued instructions that the greatest vigilance must be displayed and everything must be reported to us.

Not much later, about the end of November and the beginning of December, through the first issue of the paper, the war for national liberation, which had been published and distributed "illegally," we learned the news about the formation of the "nationalist" organization called the Balli Kombetar. As soon as we received the news about this organization and its leaders, as well as a little later, when we were acquainted with its program, the notorious "decatalogue," we were convinced that we had to do with an organization spawned by the enemy occupier which had thrown this "reserve" into the struggle against the Communist Party of Albania, the anti-fascist National Liberation Front and the partisan National Liberation War.

The name of the Balli Kombetar itself explains the whole plan of the local feudal-bourgeois reaction and the aims of the occupiers. "Balli" is not simply a literal translation of "front" and likewise "kombetar" is not simply a translation of the word "national." No, the term does not have a patriotic or linguistic character but has a profound ideological significance. For reaction the "balli" would not mean "war" as the "front" meant for us. For them the "balli" meant the "head," the "pre-destined national leadership," that is, the old unchangeable world "without end," the conservative world with oppressors and oppressed, the "Albanian National" world which rejects and fights progress and communism. This was the meaning of the Balli Kombetar created by the Italian occupiers and by means of which the heads of Albanian reaction dreamed of how they could organize and run Albania in the future.

Mithat Frasheri, an arch-traitor, was placed at the head of this assembly of traitors, and around him such notorious elements as Ali Bey Kelcyra, Kole Tromara, Faik Quku, Nuredin Vlora, and others such as Fuat Dibra, Hasan Dosti, Lef Nosi, and so on, but in fact the Balli Kombetar was led by Jacomoni, the viceroy of King Victor Emmanuel 3 and General Dalmazzo, the commander of the Italian Army in Albania.

As to the local scum who formed and led this organization, which they advertised as "patriotic," the majority were precisely those pseudo-patriotic nationalist elements with whom we had been trying for more than 2 years on end and had done everything possible to win their support for the war, the National Liberation Front and the cause of the freedom and independence of the homeland.

The bulk of these "certified patriots," Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, comprised the caravan of the "anti-Zogite" elements who after [word indistinct] years asylum on foreign soil had returned to Albania in the wake of the Italian Army and under the protection of fascist bayonets. In the past they had been deputies to the Albanian Parliament, prior to the government of Fan Noli, and had been present at the funeral of Avni Rustemi and taken part in the revolution of 1924. They had differences in their political convictions because they expressed the most varied opinions in a number of newspapers which they brought out during the bourgeois-democratic regime which the coalition of Beys and Feudals headed by Ahmet Zog overthrew. The democratic views of some of them were superficial and quickly faded, while the most of those who had posed as "partisans of Opinga," were in fact champions of the aghas and the mercantile bourgeoisie which was building itself up by buying the lands of bankrupt feudal families. Mussolini's Italy paid some of them, Alexander's Yugoslavia others, while still others were paid by the French Secret Service, the British Intelligence Service, the Greek Asphalia, the American Secret Service, and so on. They were divided into groups, but not according to their political tendencies and views, each with its own program and organization, newspaper and other publications. Although they tried to present their political squabbles as originating from differences in their political views, in fact they were grouped according to the sources from which they received their subsidies, their flow of income. Each group had its "premises" in a cafe which the members of other "groups" did not enter. All their activity as "great politicians" amounted to reading that newspaper which was provided by the cafe where they sat all day indulging in idle talk and "academic" discussions about international problems which were accompanied by a few curses about Zog. When they ran out of words and their "opposition" spirit dried up, they began playing poker and bridge and each tried to rob the other at gambling.

I am not exaggerating these things, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses. When I was a student in France, on my way back to Albania for holidays or on the return journey, I stopped both in Bari, where I caught the ship, and in Paris. During these transit stops I have seen how they lived with my own eyes. For instance, I was several times in the Stoppani cafe in Bari which was one of the "best known" cafes of these emigrants in which the "honourables," former deputies and other members of the "Zogite opposition," like Bahri Omari, Sheh Karbunara, Muharrem Vllamasi, Qamil Cela, whom they considered a "red," an officer called

Leke Margjini and others of the same type gathered. In Bari there were other emigrants who came around, but these were the main ones, the "heirs to the anti-Zogite policy" and the Stoppani cafe was their "parliament." Allegedly to protect their lives the Italian Government had openly appointed an official police guard for these "honourables" apart from others who shadowed them.

These pseudo-politicians, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, these supporters of the mercantile bourgeoisie and aghas had hatred for communism in their blood stream and this they demonstrated later. As for any organization on their part within the country, not only did this not exist, but they had not sent any newspapers, pamphlets or even a single leaflet into Albania. Their "activity" could not be compared even with that of democratic elements among the exiles like Omer Nishani or Fan Noli himself, whose disciples they claimed to be let alone with the activity of revolutionary communist militant like Ali Kelmendi, Halim Xhelo and Riza Cerova, who worked abroad but also entered Albania legally or illegally, and worked under the threat of imprisonment, internment and murder.

The "outstanding patriots" returned from Europe, sounded out the terrain, sniffed out where the lire came from and how, sounded out the quislings, the Italian and Albanian fascist hierarchs, posed as politically "undefiled," as "able men and politicians," as "men who had made sacrifices for this nation," while "languishing" on foreign soil, so now that the "sea had turned into yoghurt" they ought to be given not spoons but ladles. They were installed in homes, their salaries continued, but in what way, nobody knew. The occupier wanted to legalize these salaries, but the "fathers of the nation" put up resistance in this direction because this would mean that the pseudo-patriots would be compromised in the eyes of the people and committed to the dance. However, fascist Italy was to allow them to retain their disguise, just as long as it was in its interests, because it had taken into account the role of the reactionary chiefs of the political exiles in its plans for the occupation of Albania. It was not for nothing that Zog's "great friend" had long been working to organise them, had kept and subsidized them, allegedly in secret ways, because Zog did not dare make the slightest protest. Fascism had considered and was to use these men as a reserve for the domination of Albania and they were an important card in the Italian game of "The Liberation of Albania from Zog." These elements had become puppets and as such nobody was going to ask them what role they were voting to play in the prepared plot, and fascism divided the roles amongst the groups of these political exiles. Some of them, such as Mustafa Kruja and others, it used directly to govern its "colony," while the others it kept in reserve.

It was not that fascist Italy had no need of them, but it knew that it could not bring them into use before Verlaci, Mustafa Merlika, Eqrem Bey Libohova, Maliq Bushati, and so on. They were "the first violins," while the others had to submit to the Quisling regime of the occupiers and work for it and, moreover, at first shed the odd tear for Albania and Albanianism. All this was a puppet play but the captor Italy had not staged it for nothing. In this way, these pseudo-patriots, pseudo-democrats and fascists were brought into the ranks of the Italian fascist occupiers. Some of them were made members of the "Council of State" created especially for them, while, as I said, the

others became local fascist chiefs, and others still received "pensions" and bribes without occupying any definite post, so that they could retain for a while the reputation of "unblemished patriots" although all the time they carried on disguised propaganda against the people's resistance. The elements of this group temporarily left in reserve were closely linked with fascist Italy, but their role was to carry out subversive activity within the struggle of the Albanian people and to co-ordinate their demagogy with the bludgeon which Mustafa Merlika wielded openly, their mission was to link the maximum number of people to the fascist band-wagon through deception and threats and to win over the peasantry and the intellectuals.

Of course, apart from the knowledge which we had from the period prior to the occupation, we created a more complete and accurate opinion about them during our many attempts to "fan up" their patriotism, that is, to unite them with the war, with the front, with the great cause of the homeland. As I have already shown in detail, however, initially they treated us with total disregard, and, indeed, implied that they could hardly deign to talk with us "hot-headed young reds." There were two main reasons for this stand of theirs towards us in the initial stage of our contacts with them:

First among these "nationalist-democrates," who lived on fascist hand-outs and who were neither nationalists nor democrats, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, the idea prevailed that they were the "most capable," were "proven politicians," that "the people loved and respected them" and, hence, they thought they were destined, when the favourable moment came, to take power and govern the country. Thus, with their delirium and these absurd illusions they had about themselves they could not even think, let alone accept, that their time had passed and that now new men were emerging from the ranks of the common people, ready to take over responsibility for the fate of the homeland. Second, this "disdainful" attitude towards us in this first phase of the war was dictated to them by the fascist occupier and open reaction, with the aim that we, "young people," would be overawed by their "profound reasoning" and lose heart, hence, would "come to our senses" as they advised us, reconcile ourselves to the situation and, while swallowing the misfortunes of the homeland, enjoy the blessings of the fascist order.

Of course, regardless of the "disdain," "gibes" and "remonstrances" of these old men, harnessed to the fascist plough, we carried on with our work and were to witness all their metamorphoses which appeared ridiculous but, in fact, were done under orders. When, to their astonishment, they saw that we were really taking the reins of the war in hand, they were obliged and ordered to come and seek us out, to try and persuade us "for the sake of suffering Albania" to proceed no further on the course of "adventurism" which we had taken.

However, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, when all these manoeuvres and efforts of theirs to "soften" us got nowhere, when we organized the conference of Peza and achieved one victory after the other, then "the fathers of the nation" received orders to change their tactic immediately: the notorious Balli Kombetar emerged, or more precisely, was produced in the workshops of the vice-regal administrations as a counterweight to the National Liberation Front, the councils and the National Liberation War which our Communist Party was leading.

Some 2 years later, in the counsel of the war, when we were on the eve of the liberation of Albania and finally settling accounts with the occupier and the whole of internal reaction, precisely on this problem we were to hear, amongst many others, this absurd paradox:

The Balli Kombetar emerged allegedly as a result of the inadequate work of the CPA. Moreover, as a consequence of a sectarian stand which we had allegedly adopted towards those elements who subsequently became leaders of the Balli Kombetar.

This "gem," which we had heard for the first time from the mouth of Tempo in March 1943 in Labinot, was repeated at Odrican and later at Berat by Tito's other delegate, Velmir Stojnic and was quickly taken up by Sejfulla Maleshova, Koci Xoxe and others who tried to justify it.

Shocked and angry at the same time, I asked them, "what do you consider sectarianism? The fact that all of us, without exception, have held meeting after meeting, frequently for whole days and nights, with all these dregs of history and patriotism? The fact that we have listened patiently to all their filthy insinuations and accusations against us when they deserved to be told 'go to the devil'?"

"They, why did they not come with you, but organized themselves in a separate organization Stojnic tried to "catch" me. "What drove them to the right? Why did they oppose the front and the party?"

"I can answer your question," I told him, "but first it would be better for us to hear your opinion because you have more experience: Why did the Mihajlovites, the Ustash the Chetniks and a lot of others of the same type, become enemies of the National Liberation Front and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia? What took them from the side of 'patriotism' and pushed them to the right?"

Stojnic stared at me, dumb with fury. It was not just the anger and irony of my words which struck him dumb. He did not know what to say. Sejfulla tried to come to his aid:

There is no need to dwell at length on these long arguments of those difficult days. Many of them I have mentioned in writes further on, but I brought up this fragment from the autumn of 1944 in order to compare it with the period and concrete situation under discussion, that is, the period when the Balli Kombetar had emerged on the scene at the end of 1942. From this comparison between the Titoite accusation of "sectarianism" and our concrete stand, anyone, even the most ill-informed or ill-intentioned, can see clearly what a correct stand we adopted, what great work and efforts we made with the mixture of pseudo-patriots, what wisdom and patience we displayed in order to convince them to join in the war together with the people.

Hence, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, the Balli Kombetar emerged on the scene because well before this, the CPA had emerged on the scene of history with a correct line, with a clear program, with the will, determination and ability

to go among the masses and win them to its cause. Had our party not existed, had we not achieved the successes which we achieved in less than a year of the existence and activity of the party, that is, had we remained silent, then perhaps, reaction would not have made the effort to assemble and organize itself. In brief, they emerged as reaction not against the occupier, but as reaction against us, against the CPA, against the National Liberation Front and the national liberation councils, against the partisan ceta, units and detachments which were filling the country.

We were clear about this "development" of reaction from the outset. Indeed, even before we learned of the formation of the Balli we had discussed and taken into account the possibility of an organization of pseudo-patriotic reaction in order to oppose us.

Now we had to define and maintain such a correct, vigilant and prudent stand thanks to which we would ensure the greatest possible progress of our cause towards victory, regardless of the organizations and groupings which internal reaction was assuming and might alter in the future. It is a merit of our party that it accomplished this extremely complex and difficult task, too, with honour, without permitting any sectarianism or opportunism and as a consequence of this the solutions and results achieved were the best possible and most acceptable for the years of the war, but above all, they were solutions which were vital to the future of the homeland, the people and socialism in Albania.

On this problem, too, the work of our party constitutes a rich experience of very great political and ideological value and importance. History has had its say about this experience. Since that period I have frequently written and spoken about that stern, complex but truly vital struggle which we had to wage along with the war against the occupier.

First of all, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, aware from the outset that reaction was organizing itself not against the occupiers but against us, convinced that if it were to fight with arms it would do this only against the CPA, the front, the National Liberation Army and councils (and this is what occurred), towards the organizations of reaction we defined and applied a line and tactics which made it possible to avoid fratricidal war in the ranks of the Albanian people, and the disruption and disorganization of the patriotic unity of the masses.

Second, while compelling reaction, which had not raised a hand to fight the occupier, not to engage in open fight against the party and the people, either (for as long as possible), at the same time we did not for one moment permit any weakening of the National Liberation War of the people or any violation of the leading role of the party in the front. In the councils or in the National Liberation Army, for the sake of "maintaining peace between us" we did not permit any deviation from the program of the party, that is, we did not accept or reach any opportunist or social-semocratic unity or "fraternization" with the Balli or anybody else.

Third, thanks to the correct line, neither sectarian nor opportunist, towards reaction, and in the concrete case towards the Balli we managed to bring about

a profound differentiation in its ranks. We were able to separate and save those who were deceived by bringing them over to our side. Those who adhered to the principle "neither with one side nor the other" we neutralized and kept from fighting us, and we were able to bring out clearly before the eyes of the people the detestable figure and counter-revolutionary action of the traitor chiefs of reaction. And when matters reached the phase when we had in our possession a whole series of facts exposing the activity of these collaborators with the occupiers when they had been discredited in the eyes of the masses. Their own treachery was to compel them to play the final act: Left like a handful of dregs, without any hope for support, without any basis among the people, they went over openly to support the Nazi detachments against our partisan forces and against the people who had risen in the general insurrection.

Now the armed struggle carried the differentiation through to the end. Thus, thanks to the line pursued by our party, the liberation of the homeland from the Nazi-fascist occupiers coincided with the elimination of all those criminals, the former representatives of the exploiting classes, from the scene of Albanian life. A final result was achieved: The National Liberation War had been transformed into a popular revolution and was about to be crowned a success.

Precisely in this particular experience of coping with and defeating reaction lies one of the greatest merits of the Communist Party of Albania, a merit which had profound and decisive repercussions both on the development of the war and for the reliable future of the revolution in Albania.

--The party denounced in a clear-cut way the aims of Balli Kombetar, saving the misled and unaware element.

Once we had learned the formation of the Balli Kombetar and were acquainted with its so-called decalogue in which the Ballis proclaimed its program, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, we discussed the matter extensively and decided to attack it precisely on its weakest point, on its demagogy and vows about "patriotism."

Among the points of the "decalogue" of the Balli Kombetar there was one about "a free Albania," and "the elimination of exploitation," and even the odd timorous word about "the war against the occupier," but apparently the Balli Kombetar was preparing for war against the Martians because the Italian occupiers were not mentioned. In this way the chiefs of the Balli Kombetar were trying to safeguard their nationalist colours, so that they would be better able to play the role of the Trojan horse in the ranks of the Albanian people who hated and were fighting the occupier.

We seized on this "reluctant patriotism" of the Balli Kombetar and at the proper moment, at a meeting organized in Tirana, we told the representatives of that organization:

"We have heard about your organization and have read the program which you proclaimed. There you express your desire for a 'free Albania,' for driving out the foreigners', etc. These are things which unite us because we have been fighting and shedding blood over these things 2 years now. As you know, the National Liberation Front of the Albanian people which unites all the masses, anti-fascist national currents and organizations in its ranks, was formed some time ago. On the basis of the platform of the war, you, too, ought to adhere to this front."

"We do not recognize your front," replied the representatives of the Balli Kombetar.

We talked to them patiently about the Conference of Peza, the participation in it and its decisions, but the men of the Balli Kombetar again objected:

"We do not recognize either the Conference of Peza or its decisions."

Since they were feigning ignorance, we, without losing our aplomb, told them that their chiefs were informed about the conference.

Since they could not deny these facts, the representatives of the Balli Kombetar played another card:

"Yes, yes, we know all this," they said, "but you went to the conference as a party, while we nationalists were invited as individuals. We did not take part in it as an organization, therefore we do not recognize either the Conference of Peza or the National Liberation Front."

"We would not have failed to invite you as an organization," we told them, "but how could we invite you when your organization did not exist at the time when the Conference of Peza was held?"

"How can you say the Balli did not exist? We were alive" objected one of the representatives of the pseudo-patriots.

"We knew that you were alive, that's why we invited you," was our reply, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. "But we could not read the cups to foretell the existence of an organization of which there was no living sign, not even with a leaflet or proclamation, let alone with rifles, and indeed none of you even mentioned it."

But the delegates of the Balli Kombetar were deaf in that ear. Then, the representatives of the front said to them:

"Your objections are baseless and utterly fromal. In our opinion it is of no importance whether or not you were at Peza. The important thing is that we agree to fight together against the same enemy. Are you for the war?"

"We are," agreed the representatives of the Balli Kombetar.

"Then, what is stopping you? We are presenting to you a concrete platform of struggle and unity which thousands and thousands of people all over the country have embraced months ago, so let us discuss the matter on this basis. We say to you: Join the front and take part in the war."

"The National Liberation Front you are talking about is your Communist Party itself camouflaged with the name front. By telling us to join the front, willy nilly you are asking us to take part in your party."

"No, even if you beg us we would neither ask this of you nor permit it," we said. You are trying in vain to confuse things which are clear as the light of day: The Communist Party is a political party the doors of which are open only to those who embrace a definite ideology--the communist ideology, to those who accept and apply given norms and principles which are extremely scientific and rigorous. You cannot do this and no one is asking you to.

"While the front, gentlemen," we continued, "is a broad organization of the masses, the doors of which are opened to all genuine patriots, to all anti-fascist trends and organizations which are ready to take part in the armed struggle against the occupier. The main thing now is that we should all unite to win freedom. This militant union is the front."

"Even if this were so, we could not join it, because the front fights with the program and slogans of the Communist Party," the representatives of the Balli Kombetar tried to find a way out.

"But what are our concrete program and slogans?" We asked them, and continued: "The very thing that our national anthem says: 'around the flag united, with one desire, for one aim'/ War against the occupier for the liberation of the country. Go ahead and present some more militant program or slogan which will serve the aims of the homeland and the people better and we shall accept them."

The representatives of the Balli Kombetar were non-plussed by our suggestion and looked at one another [word indistinct] until one of them, as the most senior, in a quiet tone of the man of Wrrrem, began to "teach" us their "great" "refined" policy. In essence the "lesson" was this:

"We recognize the Communist Party as a party which does not like fascism, and we, the Balli, do not like it either. But we differ over the way in which we should fight it. You communists are hasty, you are fanning up feuds, you are infuriating the Italians who are very strong and this fury is falling and will continue to fall on the people, on the youth. We must safeguard these forces because we need them for the future. After all, it's a pity to shed all this blood," said the representative of the Balli Kombetar and concluded: "The Balli is for waiting until the time comes, hence hasty actions should not be undertaken."

"What time have you in mind?" We asked them, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on.

When fascism has been badly knocked about and has one foot in the grave, then, we should rise, give it a shove and win freedom without much bloodshed" replied the representative of the Balli Kombetar.

"A strange strategy," we said. "But there is one thing we don't understand: If we have to sit idle, if all the enslaved peoples are going to sit idle, then who will knock fascism about and prepare it for us to give it the final shove?"

In essence that is how the first meeting of the representatives of the National Liberation General Council and the representatives of the Balli Kombetar, a meeting which was organized on the initiative of the CPA in Tirana in January 1943, began and ended, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

We had foreseen and expected this stand of theirs, they came to the meeting with the aim of drawing us into an endless series of talks and "discussions" in which we would beat the air and, meanwhile, they would act with cunning and demagogy to disintegrate the ranks of the front, to undermine the authority which the party had gained among the masses and, consequently, to quell the National Liberation War which we were stepping up from day to day. That is what fascism had demanded of this counter-revolutionary grouping, therefore, in the initial phase the aim of the Balli Kombetar was to neutralize our activity and to "gently" displace the party from its correct line and the role which it had gained. This would have been a great victory and gift for Jacomoni and Merlika, and at the same time, a victory for the traitor chiefs of the Balli Kombetar: They would have eliminated from the scene the greatest obstacle and sworn enemy of their aims and vital interests.

Obviously, however, these were the aims and calculations of the occupier and reaction, which we had long foreseen and which opposed and would continue to oppose with all our might without making the slightest concession in our program and stand.

It is well-known, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, that the Balli Kombetar was created at a time when the prestige of the CPA and the front had been enhanced, when the partisan ceta and units had been extended, and their number was increasing continuously, when the people were seeing and becoming more and more convinced each day with facts that they were the only real forces in the war against the occupier. The international position of the national liberation movement had been strengthened also, especially after December 1942 when the foreign ministers of the three great powers of the anti-fascist coalition, the Soviet Union, the USA and Great Britain, recognized the war of the Albanian people and the post-war independence of Albania in public declarations. That was a blow to reaction within the country which screamed that allegedly the axis powers would guarantee the freedom and sovereignty of Albania, while the heads of the Balli Kombetar were not pleased about this recognition because the authority of the National Liberation Front was increased.

Further on Comrade Enver Hoxha underlines that, our position would be this: Knowing the strategy and tactics of the Balli Kombetar, our duty was to oppose them with our correct and far-sighted strategy and tactics. These would un-

mask and weaken the Balli Kombetar. It would undergo a process of erosion and at a time when our fight was stepped up the leaders of the Balli Kombetar would be openly recognized as collaborationists. The ranks of their organization would thin out and disintegrate. Hence, its basis of honest but misled elements would abandon it, just as they did. Likewise, the comrades in the district were instructed that the work of the party and the front must be further intensified and meetings and conferences should be organized with the people, the intellectuals and others in order to ceaselessly publicize and make clearer the line of the Communist Party of Albania and the program of the National Liberation Front.

The process of exposure and self-exposure now began to assume broader proportions. Not only the people Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, but the misled elements who had joined this nest of rogues by Mistale began to fall off from the chiefs and the criminal thieves.

Our best propaganda, however, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, was provided by the partisan units, ceta and battalions which were making life hell for the enemy. And the national liberation councils in the liberated zones in the activities of which the people were seeing the birth of the new state power, their own state power. This propaganda was very effective and the broad masses of the people were coming closer and closer each day to the war, the front and the party. For us this had colossal importance.

Especially after the 1st national conference of the CPA in March 1943, the need arose for more intensive work to speed up the deepening of the differentiation within the ranks of the Balli Kombetar. The maintaining which dictated to us the intensification of our work in regard to this organization was the orientation of the conference to further strengthen and consolidate the unity of the people, the councils and the armed partisan detachments now that we were on the verge of the general armed uprising. As was decided at the conference and the Central Committee instructed. In the meetings with Balli Kombetar the stress was placed especially on those ordinary folk who had no links with the treacherous activity of the chiefs except the hereditary influence of the Balli Kombetar chiefs and their own political unclarity.

Further on, Comrade Enver Hoxha describes the meetings he has had at that time with the representatives of Balli Kombetar and stressed in continuation: These last two meetings which we organized with the chiefs of the Balli Kombetar in Tirana began and ended like the previous ones. With the same trickery on their part and the same straightforward and unyielding stand on our part. This time, however, in conclusion we pointed out:

"Overlooking the bitter past we again held out our hand to save you, but once again you do not want to follow the course that should be followed. Very well [word indistinct] time is proving who is right. But there is one thing you must bear in mind: If you don't wish to fight against the occupier at least don't play the occupier's game, don't try to oppose our war, the war of the Albanian people against fascism and its collaborators. You must put an immediate stop to your campaign of slanders and attacks against the front and the national liberation councils and the thieving and looting which your men

are doing in the villages. You can take this as advice or as a warning, whichever you like. We are very clear about how much can be endured and tolerated."

Further on, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes in the book about the uninterrupted treacherous activity of the Balli Kombetar, about the manoeuvres and machinations of its chieftains to stand far from the war against the occupier and at the same time he describes the uncompromising struggle waged by the party to expose this hostile activity. Comrade Enver Hoxha presented the question of the stand towards Balli Kombetar also in the meeting of the National Liberation General Council, which was held in Labinot of Elabasan, in July 1943. Further on he writes:

--The party denounced forcefully the notorious Mukje agreement.

In the report which I presented to the meeting, I made a detailed analysis of the work we had done and the efforts we had made right up till those moments to convince the Balli Kombetar to take part in the war against fascism and accept the political line which we had endorsed at the conference of Peza. In this wide ranging analysis which I made of the problem I had in mind two main aims. First, to give those members of the General Council who had not been in continuous contact with the council detailed information about the line pursued and the concrete activities which had been carried out, and second, to define the platform of talks which we envisaged to hold with the Balli Kombetar, calling on it for the last time to really involve itself in the war and give up its collaboration with the enemy and the struggle against the National Liberation Front and the Communist Party.

Those who spoke in the discussion that followed the report approved the line pursued and described all the efforts made up till that time as correct. Finally it was decided that one more meeting should be held with the representatives of that organization, at which they would be asked to give a clear and final answer as to whether or not the Balli Kombetar was going to take part in the war.

As far as I remember the first to take part in the discussion of this question was Ymer Dishnica.

Ymer concluded his contribution by saying: "I think that in the talks which are to be held the Ballists must be told: 'With you or without you we are going to wage the war to the end,' and we should appeal to them once more for a fighting unity to defeat the occupiers and for a free and democratic Albania."

I mentioned this contribution of Ymer Dishnica's in order to stress that year, who was to head the delegation of the General Council to Mukje, was not only clear in advance about the position that ought to be maintained but, at least from the words he said, also seemed to have a correct view, personally, about the Balli Kombetar and the stand which had to be maintained in the meeting with its representatives.

After Ymer I took the floor again and said in substance: "We are not going to stand on ceremony with the Balli Kombetar," I continued. "The basis of the agreement which we shall propose to them should be this: Organized, uncompromising armed struggle against the occupier, the Balli Kombetar must recognize the national liberation councils as the only people's democratic state power, it must purge its ranks of the collaborationists, criminals, spies and speculators, it must immediately stop its fighting and propaganda against the front and the Communist Party, the positive elements of the Balli Kombetar must take part in the front, they must disperse their 'councils,' etc. This, then," I concluded, "should be the platform for the talks which our delegation should hold and we should appoint the delegation here."

The members of the General Council and those of the staff who had been invited to the meeting, endorsed my proposals which were accepted as the basis for the talks that would be held in the near future with the Balli Kombetar. It seemed that everything was clear even to Ymer Dishnica and Mustafa Gjinishi, who only a few days after this meeting were to play a capitulationist role in achieving the notorious Mukje agreement, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

In continuation, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes about the mistakes made by these representatives of the General Council during the talks conducted with the representatives of Balli Kombetar in Tapize and in Mukje, who, although clearly orientated by the party, fell in the tricks hatched up by "Balli" and in a dangerous treachery. Comrade Enver Hoxha writes also about the continuous contacts he had with these representatives, about the letters and instructions he sent them, after learning of their mistakes in the talks, and further on he stresses:

Ymer Dishnica's second letter still did not tell us anything of major importance and, as I learned a few days later, did not inform us accurately about the way the discussions had developed. Only one thing was clearly implied: at Mukje, near Tapiza, where the "second phase" of the talks was held. The Balli Kombetar had conducted the orchestra and, instead of our delegation and especially Ymer Dishnica and Mustafa Gjinishi setting the tone for the meeting and demanding answers to the questions which we put before them, Mithat Bey and Hasan Dosti had diverted the platform of the talks in the way they wanted. This fact alone was sufficient to draw the conclusion that our delegates were not carrying out the instructions which they had received from the leadership of the party and the standing committee of the General Council. Ymer did not write that meanwhile the agreement had been reached, not only was he confused but he had fallen completely into the trap which the Balli Kombetar had set.

That same day I sat down and wrote a long letter which has been published, therefore I shall mention only the main issues which I put before Ymer Dishnica.

"It seems to us that the talks have developed on the wrong course," I pointed out in the letter. "You did not go there to discuss independence and ethnic Albania but to put the Balli Kombetar with its back to the wall and present its delegates with these issues: They must join in the war immediately, agree to collaborate with the councils and, after they have fought. They can join the staff and take part in a national conference to which patriots from all parts of the country will come."

"These things should be the essence of the talks and such crazy things as the proclamation of independence without driving out the occupiers should not be discussed." And to cap all, "I pointed out to Dishnica, this was raised by the Ballists who have not fought, and apparently have no intention of fighting."

Less than 2 days later Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, we learned that a leaflet had been published in the name of the "Committee for the Salvation of Albania" which spoke about the unity which had been achieved between our national liberation front and the Balli Kombetar. This news alarmed us and we judged at once that, regardless of the content of the leaflet, the announcement of a unity with the Balli Kombetar and the formation of a "committee" at a time when that organization had given no proofs, was a very wrong and harmful action and in complete opposition to our line. We asked the comrades in Tirana to send us a copy of the leaflet urgently and immediately wrote a circular addressed to the organizations of the party condemning the Mukje agreement. In this circular, in the name of the Central Committee of the party I ordered that the agreement must be torn up, no mention must be made of it and our propaganda must explain our line and the conditions on the basis of which it was possible to achieve a genuine unity.

When a copy of the notorious leaflet approved under the olive-trees of Mukje reached us on the following day, we understood even more clearly what a mess Ymer and Mustafa had made, what treachery had been committed and what dangerous traps had been set for the party, the people and our National Liberation War.

In the office of the staff at Vithkuq I thumped my fist on the table and immediately wrote Ymer a letter without attempting to conceal my anger at this base betrayal which had been committed against our war. The blood we had shed, the privations we had suffered, the victories achieved and the lofty ideal which he had aroused in the hearts of the people and the partisans. Realizing the dangerous consequences which the Mukje agreement might have, I could not contain the anger which was not the mistake of our party, but the mistake of one or two individuals, while the Balli Kombetar would exploit this mistake, just as it was doing, almost before the ink with which Ymer had signed the disgraceful Mukje agreement was dried. If this inexcusable step, this grave mistake, were not eliminated immediately, it would have unimaginable consequences among the masses of the people for the fate of the war and our revolution.

"You have fallen completely into the positions of the Balli Kombetar, which is trying to hide its past, "I wrote to Ymer Dishnica among other things. 'Your leaflet talks about ethnic Albania and says nothing at all about our war against fascism, not one word about the Communist Party. You have put the Balli Kombetar, which is a basket of crabs, an organization with a limited number of individuals, on an equal footing with the National Liberation General Council which represents the anti-fascist front of the people."

I pointed out to him also that through this compromising act, with one stroke of the pen, the councils, the staff and the army, which we had built up with so much bloodshed and sacrifice, had been wiped out and in place of them a "Committee for the Salvation of Albania," which in fact would dig the grave for Albania, had emerged.

In conclusion, I informed Ymer Dishnica that the Central Committee sternly denounced the opportunist Mukje agreement as a grave violation of the political line of the party. At the end of the letter I ordered him to break off any kind of talk and to make no other agreement. I pointed out to Ymer, Mustafa and the others that they were divested of any authority to represent the National Liberation Front, if necessary the party would send another delegate there.

Time confirmed how correct and salutary was the clear-cut and intransigent stand which we decided to take towards what was hatched up at Mukje Comrade Enver Hoxha says. Had the party accepted the betrayal of Mukje its hands would have been tied, it would have been obliged to make other opportunist concessions, would have been swept by confusion and have been split, would have lost everything gained, including the trust of the masses. Acceptance of that agreement and the so-called committee for the salvation of Albania would have threatened and tragically jeopardized the future of the homeland. According to the agreement which Ymer Dishnica signed, this "committee" would have equal representation from the Balli Kombetar and the National Liberation Front and would aim to become the supreme organ of the war and the state, the Ballist members of it would do their utmost to eliminate the General Council, the general staff, and above all the leading role of the Communist Party. The very creation of this organism would mean sharing power with the big bourgeoisie and the feudal lords who, through such representatives as Ali Kelcyra, Mithat Frasheri and others, would attempt to realize their own interests. Initially, they were obliged to recognize us as partners and fight to place themselves on an equal footing with us. But in the future they would attempt to get rid of us. To seize the reins of power and to establish a moderate feudal bourgeois regime in Albania with a democratic disguise.

History is not short of instances which prove how dear is the cost of opportunist mistakes at the key moments of the war and the revolution. The capitulationist acts of the leaders of the Greek Communist Party with the local reactionary organizations and groupings, the Greek counterparts of the Balli Kombetar, cost the Greek people and the Greek Communist Party dear. Up till that time the Communist Party was the greatest organizing and leading force in Greece in the war for the liberation of the country from the German occupiers. The communists were the initiators for the formation of the liberation front of Greece, the EAM, in September 1941. In this front in which the popular Democratic Party and other patriots also took part. The Greek Communist Party played a leading role and succeeded in raising the people in the war for national and social liberation, began and built up the armed struggle and created the National Liberation Army, the ELAS. Later, however, the leaders of the Greek CP lost their bearings and submitted to the pressure of reaction and the Anglo-American "friends." The subsequent development of events in Greece is well-known and it is not difficult to understand the grave responsibility of the leaders of the Greek party. Here I want to note that, as

early as that time, our party expressed its opinions about Varkiza and their other agreements, describing those acts as betrayal to the Greek Communist Party and the Greek people.

Our party Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, did not fall into such traps and did not permit any trifling with the interests of the people and the homeland. It acted with courage and maturity, although it was a young party and small in numbers. It had the great strength of the people which gave birth to it, faith in the correctness of the unerring Marxist-Leninist theory, had the courage, wisdom and ability to avoid any mistake or act of treachery by individual persons at the proper time, as was the case of the grave betrayal at Mukje.

[17 Nov 84]

[Text] Part IV

--The Communist Party of Albania took decisions and undertook actions after it examined them well in regard to the time and the perspective and not in a spontaneous way.

Tirana, 17 November (ATA)--In his book with memoirs and historical notes "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania," Comrade Enver Hoxha writes about the measures the party took to strengthen its leading role in the entire life of the country, to strengthen the national liberation councils, to hold the Labinot meeting and the Labinot conference, to ensure the endorsement of their decisions by the people, the extension of the armed struggle etc.

--The meeting of the National Liberation General Council in Labinot. The decision to hold the Labinoti Conference and the measures for its holding.

The events which had occurred since the conference of Peza, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses further on and the major tasks which emerged before us dictated the need for a regular meeting of the leading forum of the National Liberation Front, the provisional general council, early in the summer of 1943. Such a meeting was essential both to analyse the work done by the council and each of its individual members and to take a series of decisions which the historic moment forcefully suggested. The main one of these decisions had to do with the proposal of the CC of the CPA about the formation of the general staff and the organization of our National Liberation Army, a task which had been put forward at Peza in September 1942 and for which the conditions for carrying it out had now fully matured.

We rejoiced at the fact that, besides workers and peasants, large numbers of intellectuals and other honest patriots were entering the ranks of the front, the councils and our partisan units. They were becoming aware that hatred of and refusal to reconcile themselves to the occupier alone were not sufficient and that the active contribution of each of them was required in the great war which was raging.

Further on, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes in the book about the development of the proceedings of the meeting of the National Liberation General Council on 4-10 July, Qore in Labinot of the District of Elbasan, about the discussions in the meeting about the treacherous activity of the pseudo-patriots in different regions of the country, etc.

Comrade Enver Hoxha dwells on the report he held in this meeting on the activity and the tasks of the National Liberation Councils.

In the report I stressed the importance of the conference of Peza and spoke about the work done up till that time for the setting of councils everywhere and about their functioning as organs of the war and the political power, as well as about the obstacles we had encountered in this work not only from the occupier and the Quisling authorities, but also from the "nationalists" gathered in the Balli Kombetar.

I went on to speak concretely about the situation and the work of the national liberation councils in various regions and cities of the country such as Tirana, Durres, Vlora and Mallakashtra where, despite the difficulties, the work had proceeded well, as well as about other regions, such as Shkodra, Mat, Dibra and Kruja where we were still encountering great obstacles from reaction. I criticized some shortcomings of our work for a centralized leadership of the councils by the General Council and stressed that our contact with the base had not been as continuous as the situation and our war required.

Further on Comrade Enver Hoxha writes: "The grouping of forces is becoming crystallized," I pointed out, "The build-ups of our war will [word indistinct] accelerate the process, therefore, it is an urgent task for the General Council to give the base greater assistance, to organize the people in the National Liberation Front and to strengthen the councils in the villages, the suburbs, the cities and regions."

For work to be done better the need was being felt for a document in which the rights, competences, and functions of the councils were clearly defined. Therefore, I raised the issue of a constitution for the national liberation councils the draft of which we had prepared in advance and which I would now read to the General Council for discussion. This constitution, together with the rules of the national liberation councils, would be finally approved at the 2d National Liberation Conference which would be held later.

In close connection with these problems and the whole stage which our war had reached, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, the meeting of July 1943 held an extensive discussion on the need which had arisen for the formation of the general staff of all the armed forces of the insurgent people.

It had been discussed and decided at the conference of Peza that at the proper moment, with the extension of the armed resistance to the fascist occupier and, especially, with the increase in the number of partisan ceta and units, a central staff should be created as the centre to direct the military operations of the new army which the people would [word indistinct].

And now, after a year of struggle and all-round efforts, we judged that this moment had arrived.

In the summer of 1943 the armed struggle of the Albanian people had assumed wide proportions. The number of partisan units was incomparably greater than a few months earlier, their composition had been increased and strengthened and their fighting activity, which they carried out all over the country, was dealing the enemy crushing blows. In those units, which were called regular units because they functioned permanently, about 10 thousand fighters took part. Besides about 20 thousand other fighters in the territorial units and guerrilla units. On the recommendation of the Central Committee of the party, we had gone over to the organization of battalions as bigger and more powerful units, capable of carrying out operations on a broader scale against the enemy, and the instructions had been sent out and measures were being taken for the creation, in the near future, of the first partisan brigades.

For all these reasons, charged by the Central Committee of the party, in one of the sessions of the meeting of the National Liberation General Council I rose and said to the comrades:

"From the analysis which it has made of the situation and our forces, the Central Committee of the Communist Party has arrived at the conclusion that the dimension which the National Liberation War has assumed and the achievement of the final victory over the enemy have made the organic unification of all the partisan units in a national army, directed from a single centre, urgently necessary. We propose to this council that it should examine and endorse the proposal of the CC of the CPA about the formation of the general staff of the Albanian National Liberation Army. If we accomplish this task the armed struggle of our people will be more organized and will be more successful in achieving its political and military objectives in the future.

I went on to say that the formation of this specialized organ for the military leadership of our war was necessary also for the co-ordination and collaboration of our National Liberation War with the war of the countries of the anti-fascist coalition, especially with the great allies, the Soviet Union, USA and Great Britain, and in particular, with the national liberation movements of the peoples of the Balkans.

The members of the General Council welcomed the proposal about the formation of the general staff and expressed the belief that the existence of such an organ would further strengthen the National Liberation War and would bring the day of our victory over the enemy closer. After this historic decision was taken the composition of the general staff was discussed and it was decided that the general staff of the National Liberation Army should be comprised of 12 people, concretely--Spiro Moisiu, Enver Hoxha, Myslim Peza, Haxhi Lleshi, Mustafa Xhani, Ramadan Citako, Abaz Kupa, Ymer Dishnica, Dalindreu, Mustafa Gjinishi, Sejfulla Malëshova and Bedri Spahiu. The National Liberation General Council also decided that the organizational structure of the general staff should be left to the staff itself at its first meeting.

On the following day Comrade Enver Hoxha continues the general staff of the National Liberation Army met, decided on its organizational structure, and divided the responsibilities among the members. The staff would have a commander as well as its political commissar, just as all our partisan detachments had. I proposed that Comrade Spiro Moisiu, as a patriot and specialist on military matters, should be charged with the task of commander of the general staff.

On 10 July 1943 we publicly proclaimed the historic decision about the formation of the general staff and the organization of the Albanian National Liberation Army. This day has remained and will remain as one of the most outstanding events not only of the National Liberation War, but of the whole epoch of the party, as the day of our people's army, the liberator and glorious defender of our socialist homeland.

At the end of the summer of 1943 Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, the Italian occupiers and their open collaborators were clearly in their death agony and this was accompanied not only with the mad fury of those who were drowning but also with the whetting of the appetites and stepped up efforts of the reactionaries "in readiness" who hoped to exploit the situation to take over the reins of Albania without firing a shot. Our party, the only organized internal political force, which at the head of the people had made the maximum contribution to drive the occupiers to their death, now faced other grave and decisive tests and tasks.

Those who up till then had simply been seatwarmers must in no way be allowed to benefit from the bloodshed and sacrifices of the people: The communists and all genuine patriots. That role and indisputable authority which the party, the National Liberation Front and the national liberation councils had established in the course of the war must in no way be lost and allowed to fall into the hands of others in those decisive moments. On the contrary, they had to be safeguarded and further consolidated not only de facto, through the armed struggle, but also de jure, through unshakeable decisions of the representatives of the people. The conditions for an important and decisive step towards this consolidation had matured. The moments had come for the organization of the 2d National Liberation Conference of the Albanian People.

The 2d National Liberation Conference of the Albanian People, or as we call it for short, the 2d Conference of Labinot, undoubtedly occupies one of the most prominent places in the chain of historic events of our National Liberation War. In the history of the creation, strengthening and steeling of the people's state power in Albania, in particular, the organization of this conference and its decisions have had and will continue to have exceptional importance and value.

In stressing the importance of this event, it should never be thought that the idea about the organization of this conference arose suddenly at the end of August 1943, or that we were impelled to hold it by what occurred at Mukje. No, the situation in August 1943 and the events at Mukje were to serve simply as factors to accelerate the holding of this conference as quickly as possible, but the idea of and the need for organizing it had risen and been put forward much earlier.

At the conference of Peza in September 1942, at which we laid the foundations of the front and the national liberation councils, we pointed out that in the future, when the councils had been set up and extended over most of the territory of the country, when their role and authority among the people had been increased and consolidated, the 2d National Liberation Conference would have to be organized in order to sum up what had been achieved and to define the tasks for the future in assessing the great work which had been done in this important direction of the war, the 1st Conference of the CPA in March 1943 arrived at the conclusion that the conditions for the 2d National Liberation Conference of the Albanian people were maturing, while a few months later, at the meeting of the Provisional General Council in July 1943 in Labinot, it was finally decided to call together the meeting of representatives of the Albanian people in the near future. Indeed, we charged the "standing committee" or "secretariat" of the General Council, which we elected in July in Labinot, with the preparation of the coming conference as its main and urgent task and began the preparatory work immediately after this.

I have stressed these things in order to underline once again a great truth: We never allowed any meeting, especially a meeting of national proportions, to be held hastily, because the "opportunity arose" or because "matters developed in this way." No, just as the party took the initiative about holding the Conference of Peza when it judged that the conditions were ripe and the possibilities existed for that conference, so it did in regard to the 2d Conference. We never permitted or agreed to hold hasty meetings or conferences unnecessarily, merely for the sake of holding them, or to decide things for which the time had not yet arrived.

The fundamental problem on which the conference would focus its attention, Comrade Enver Hoxha stressed was that of the strengthening and consolidation of the role of the national liberation councils, the recognition of these councils by all those who expressed themselves and were in favour of real and concrete war against the occupiers and, in connection with this main problem, the tasks for the extension and further organization of the great general struggle against the foreign yoke were to be discussed and decided. This conference would not be a meeting of individual elements, but a broad assembly of representatives of the people of different regions and of their organs of power, the national liberation councils. These representatives would be mandated delegates to a meeting which would take decisions important to the future of the homeland.

Timely measure had been taken also to ensure the best possible organization of the conference, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. The national liberation councils in the districts and regions had been informed about this important event, about the main problems which would be presented, and had been instructed on the procedure to be followed in the election of the delegates. The organizations of the party in the regions also had been instructed by the Central Committee to regard this as a serious matter and to take all the necessary measures to ensure that the election of delegates, their departure and arrival at the destination would be carried out without any incident. The number of delegates for each region would be in proportion to the number of councils existing in that particular region. Thus, those regions and dis-

districts where the work for setting up councils was not going well had a smaller representation. According to the instructions, each delegate would be provided by the National Liberation Council of his district or region with a mandate enclosed in a sealed envelope. The mandate had to be carefully safeguarded because without it no delegate would be allowed to take part in the proceedings of the conference.

The delegates began to arrive on the 2d of September, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, and by the next day almost all had come. The following day, 4 September 1943, the proceedings of the conference of Labinot commenced. It was attended by about 50 delegates, elected by the national liberation councils of the whole country, delegates of anti-fascist organizations which had adhered to the National Liberation Front, from the general staff as well as the members of the Provisional General Council. One of those missing was Abaz Kupa, to whom we had sent the invitation and the list of the problems that would be discussed in time, but, as he was to say, "work had prevented him from coming." Thus began the proceedings of the 2d National Liberation Conference at which, from 4-9 September, the delegates from the whole country, with a heavily loaded agenda (frequently the proceedings which began in the morning continued till midnight), discussed and reached decisions on problems of historic importance.

--The holding of proceedings of the Labinot Conference.

The problem which the conference dealt with Comrade Enver Hoxha writes was the question of the political power in Albania, seeing this closely linked with the real achievements of the national liberation councils from the moment when they were formed and, undoubtedly, in close connection with the new situation which had been created in the summer of 1943 and the tasks which emerged from this. Although each of the six reports delivered at the conference and the many contributions to the discussion about them dealt more extensively with particular aspects or problems, a common idea linked them and pervaded them all: The real power which we had managed to create through an all-sided struggle with arms, with propaganda, with concrete work with the masses, etc, etc, now had to be centralized and proclaimed the only state power of the people in Albania. Every effort must be made to ensure that this state power carried out its tasks and role in the best possible way all over the country and was strengthened and protected as the inviolable power of the insurgent people.

The report on the internal and external situation, with which the proceedings of the first session began, examined the questions of the development of the anti-fascist war on an international level in close connection with the developments of our National Liberation War and especially with the major results in this war.

"Our war, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes has dealt the fascist enemy and its collaborators uninterrupted blows, had made life hell for them, and we are proud that our people have made and are making a major contribution to the final defeat which is threatening fascist Italy," said the report. "This is precisely what has enhanced the authority and prestige of our national liberation movement and won it recognition in the international arena."

One of the delegates in his discussion said: "We have not sought or achieved our recognition in the international arena through ambassadors or diplomatic missions, but through the war against the occupier. The liberation war is and will be the foreign minister of the Albanian people."

In this poetic way, the comrade touched on a great and incontestable truth: The recognition in the international arena of our people's armed struggle constituted, at the same time, an important factor and a guarantee of the recognition and affirmation of the other major achievements and results of this struggle, especially at those moments this aspect of the problem assumed particular importance. As I said, there was talk and the obvious possibility of an Anglo-American landing in the Balkans, and while it was true that we recognized and spoke about their role in the anti-fascist alliance, at the same time, we also knew their secret and sinister aims and interests in Albania and in other countries. Hence, it was important that, if they were to land at those moments, they found us not only in command of the war against fascism, but also in command of our own affairs, masters of our own country. That is, they had to see and be obliged to recognize not only a people mobilized in war, but also a people who, as a result of the war, were now effectively exercising their power through the national liberation councils.

This problem was thrashed out even more clearly and directly in the conference in the discussions of the report on the situation, activity and present and future tasks of the national liberation councils, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. Delegates from Tirana, Shkodra, Durres, Vlora, Gjirokastra, Elbasan and elsewhere spoke concretely about the extension and strengthening of the national liberation councils in the regions, cities and villages, about their major role in the mobilization of the people in the war, about their aid for the detachments of the National Liberation Army and the solution of the vital problems of the people, especially in the liberated zones.

"In the national liberation councils, the people are seeing themselves not only at war but also in power," said Medar Shtylla amongst other things. "The more we enhance the role and activity of the councils, the more the mobilization of the people in the war will be increased because the ordinary folk are convinced that the bloodshed and sacrifices will not be in vain."

Among others, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, Koco Tashko also took the floor. He considered it in order to make a criticism about the "higher" organs of the councils as if there existed parochialism in the General Council. His aim was to denigrate the active comrades, who were members of the General Council, of which Koco thought he ought to be a member 'sine qua non,' just as he claimed that he certainly ought to be a member of the leadership of the party.

"We have had and have members of the General Council and delegates charged with the qualities and competences of members of the council in all zones," I said speaking to Koco Tashko. "Let each of us do his best in his own zone and there is no reason for anyone to criticize us for parochialism."

Of course I am not saying, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, that in the activity of the councils at those moments we did not have shortcomings or weaknesses. On the contrary, we recognized the shortcomings, struggled to improve the work as much as possible, always aware that not everything would be achieved immediately and aware, likewise, that any maniac demanding "absolute perfection" would have plenty of things on which "to seize." Even after this for us the main thing was that the councils were in existence, that they were carrying out their activity, that they were recognized by the people as such and playing the role of the state power of the people in Albania.

Now, this result had to be proclaimed in law, so that this real power which the people had created in the heat of the war, would not be seized by others. As I said, the dangers in this fundamental aspect were by no means hypothetical. The time had come to take another stand towards reaction which was now posing as "anti-fascist," to tell it bluntly and firmly that the people would no longer tolerate it to manoeuvre at their expense.

I had prepared a report "on our attitude towards the different trends outside the national liberation movement" which I delivered at the conference about this problem of first-rate importance. I shall not dwell on this report, because its content is known and it has been published, but I want to re-emphasize only some fundamental aspects which have to do mostly with the reasons which impelled us to prepare and present this document to the conference and what the conference discussed and decided about the problems raised in it.

Although the central point of the report was our attitude towards various trends and organizations in the country, in fact, the whole report was a reflection of the line and work of our party for the formation and strengthening of the National Liberation Front and the national liberation councils. I outlined to the conference the history and problems of the whole process which had developed, both before and after the conference of Peza, pointing out that while the masses of the common people, genuine honest patriots, had united in the National Liberation Front and joined in the war, the whole lot of pseudo-patriotic elements of the most various shades and tendencies were standing more and more aloof from and opposing the front and the anti-fascist war.

In the report I dealt in particular with the question of the Balli Kombetar, the conditions and reasons for its emergence, the great amount of work we had done and our patient efforts to involve it in the war and in concluding this question I said:

"The Balli Kombetar, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses has waged an all-round ideological, political and military struggle against the national liberation movement. It has tried to split it, to arouse the people against the communists and genuine patriots. Moreover, in spirit, its chiefs have been and still are with Italy and Germany and have supported the Quislings from Mustafa Kruja to Maliq Bushati, whom they themselves recommended to Jacomoni. The Balli Kombetar has been a supporter of all the occupiers' political manoeuvres from the 'ethnic Albania' to 'the Albanian Army' and 'Albanian gendarmerie.' The chiefs of the Balli pose as patriots, but," I stressed, "the burnt-out villages of Vlora, Mallakstra and other districts where they guaranteed peace

and quiet for the fascist legions and, indeed, collaborated with them, are evidence of their patriotism. And these collaborators with fascism, who have stained their hands with the blood of the finest sons of the people, are so shameless as to appeal to us to 'return to Albanian patriotism.'"

In the course of this expose, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, I dealt in detail in my report with the question of the Mukje meeting, the reasons why we decided to go to this final meeting with the chiefs of the Balli, with the shameful and impermissible compromise into which our representatives fell, and, in particular, I dwelt on the grave political consequences which flowed from it and clearly explained the reasons why we immediately denounced the Mukje agreement as invalid and tore it up.

"The comrades entrusted with this task proved incapable of defending the line of the General Council, but, instead, fell into the lap of the Balli Kombetar, accepted its platform, and the Balli Kombetar suddenly emerged as an organized party, as if it had allegedly fought as much as, if not more than, the National Liberation Front.

"At the particular moments through which the country is passing, I went on," Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, "the chiefs of the Balli, who up till now have not fired a shot against the occupier, and who are seeing the strength of the state power we have created, pretend they accept the role of a partner in it, but always with the intention of seizing the whole power. It is impermissible for us to fall into this tragic mistake. The power of the national liberation councils is the power of the insurgent people and not of gangs of traitors and counter-revolutionaries. Now that we have rejected the Mukje agreement they are trying to find other ways to take power. We must close off any path of possibility for them to achieve this, and one of the first and main acts in this direction is the decision we propose this conference should take: We should declare the national liberation councils the sole state power of the people in Albania. We must take this decision not only because it is a step for which all the conditions for it have fully matured but also because there is an indispensable need to do so. After all, we are legislating an accomplished reality, confirmed by our war and our work, recognized by the people and functioning effectively in Albania. With this act we will block the way to both internal and external reaction in their manoeuvres and aims to seize power."

The participants in the conference applauded this report which I delivered on behalf of the National Liberation General Council. This showed that they, like the entire people whom they represented, approved the correct political line of our [word indistinct] and the National Liberation Front, because this correct and consistent line was the source of all the concrete results we had achieved. And one of the greatest victories was precisely the new state power that was emerging, the power of the national liberation councils, the power of the people. We were at the dawn of a new epoch for Albania.

In his contribution, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes Ymer Dishnica in general accepted the blame for the great mistake he had committed, although he tried to justify it with the circumstances.

As for Mustafa Gjinishi, he did not fail to attack the stand of the party and the National Liberation Front towards the Balli Kombetar, which he even tried to defend.

I interrupted Mustafa Gjinishi, "You alone, apparently, are the only one who has not understood that the Balli Kombetar is an organization which was formed to oppose the national liberation movement. The other comrades and the people have understood this, but I believe that your purpose is to make the General Council a partner in the mistakes which you and Ymer have committed. The council has been clear about what the Balli Kombetar was and you were present at the meetings when we discussed this problem. We were not going to send a delegation to Mukje. You made the mistake and the council disapproved what you did."

The other comrades who discussed this point also directly or indirectly gave this disguised agent of the British, of Abaz Kupi and of all the reactionary forces the reply he deserved.

To conclude the discussion, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, I took the floor again and, in underlining the many major tasks which emerged for the national liberation councils, I pointed out among other things:

"Now that the power of the councils has been centralized and proclaimed the only power of the people, it is essential that the General Council, which this conference will elect, should set up a network of different organs and sections everywhere to organize the work in every field, in the economy, education, propaganda, etc. There must be no field in which the work is lame, the role of the councils must be felt and asserted everywhere, otherwise the war itself would be crippled and the future of the people jeopardized."

The conference examined the problems related to the strengthening of the state power in close connection with the strengthening of the anti-fascist National Liberation Front and the strengthening and inclusion in the ranks of the front of all the organizations of the masses formed by the party.

Comrade Nexhmije Xhuglini, Ollga Plumbi and Ela Gjikonidi spoke in detail at the conference about the struggle of the women and stressed the need for a better organization of the Albanian anti-fascist women.

"The youth are taking part in the war en masse and demand that they should be free to achieve their own desires in free Albania. The war for liberation will produce a youth in which the finest virtues of our nation are developed and further enhanced. The homeland itself will benefit from this," was stated at the conference.

In close connection with the central issue and the other matters that were thrashed out there, the conference also analysed the problems which had to do with the further strengthening of the armed struggle and in this context, the National Liberation Army of the Albanian people.

When the discussion of the reports was completed, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, the conference elected the commission for the final drafting of the resolution and the appeal addressed to the Albanian people. We had prepared a draft of the resolution in advance, but now it had to be enriched in the spirit of the discussion and the decisions of the conference so that it would serve in the best possible way to make things clear to the people, the national liberation councils, and so on.

While the commission appointed was working in one of the rooms of the second floor, one of the members of the General Council read the constitution and rules of the national liberation councils to the delegates. These were important documents, the first founding acts, you might say, the first "constitution" of the new people's state power.

The conference elected the National Liberation General Council comprised of 62 members. For its part the council elected a standing committee of 16 members.

So ended, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, the proceedings of the 2d National Liberation Conference which took decisions of the greatest importance for the armed struggle of the Albanian people and their state power. The general armed uprising and the power of the councils, the only power of the people in Albania, were the two main slogans with vital importance for our country and its future approved at the conference, which the delegates took with them in order to disseminate and work to apply them all over Albania.

--The relatisation of the tasks laid down by the Labinot conference. The extension of the armed struggle of the Albanian people under the new created conditions.

The situation created after the capitulation of fascist Italy demanded swift actions and urgent measures, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on. We must not let anything slip, especially now that the initiative was coming completely into our hands. Therefore, we decided and immediately issued orders, that the forces of the National Liberation Army should occupy all the zones and cities which had been in the hands of the Italian occupiers and establish the power of the national liberation councils there. Besides this, we decided that, just as at Barmash and elsewhere, we should continue the uninterrupted attacks on the Nazi detachments which were still not fully deployed in Albania. It was particularly important to liberate those inhabited centres which our forces had the possibility to take and to establish the power of the national liberation councils there.

Irrespective of how events would develop subsequently (this would depend especially on the level of the military intervention of the Nazi or the Anglo-American allies), the establishment of the power of the councils in the cities and other inhabited centres would have very great political importance. The people would see and feel the strength, authority and ability of their own power, while the pseudo-patriotic reaction and the Anglo-American external reaction would understand better that their political manoeuvres had failed and were no longer of any use. Therefore, the strengthening of the state

power, of the councils and the army everywhere, the mobilization of the people around the national liberation councils and in the ranks of the National Liberation Army and the discrediting of the Balli Kombetar to deprive it of any influence among the people, presented itself as a vital task. In this way we would have the strength and the right to say to the allies, if they were to make a landing, "you have come to Albania only to fight Hitlerite Germany, but the government of the country is and will remain in the hands of the national liberation movement."

In context of all these measures and tasks Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, the general staff planned, in conformity with the situation, a possible assault on the capital so that it would be liberated and our state power in all its links established there, too.

To this end, immediately after the conclusion of the 2d National Liberation Conference, while the delegates set out for the regions and the zones which they represented, a part of the general staff of the National Liberation Army left Labinot and established itself near the capital, at Arbana, where the command of the group of Peza was also established during those days. Here the organization and inauguration of the 3d shock brigade, an event in which Spiro Moisiu and I and other comrades of the general staff were to take part, would be carried out. As I said, however, our establishment in this zone was conditioned especially by the political and military situation which could be created in our country in the case of some eventual landing of the allies in the Balkans and, especially, in Albania.

As soon as we had established ourselves in Arbana, I summoned Comrade Gogo Nushi to inform me about the state of our forces and the enemy forces in the capital and to discuss with him the tasks of the moment.

"What do you think?" I asked him, "How many armed forces could be raised from Tirana to support a co-ordinated attack of the partisan forces from the surrounding hills?"

"Apart from all the forces of the guerrilla units, which are armed and ready to go on to the attack at any moment, I am convinced that the youth and the people will willingly rise in the attack for the liberation of the capital," replied Gogo but went on to say, "the worst of it is we are short of weapons."

"You know what the well-known song says, 'If you have no weapons, find them, seize them from the hands of the enemy'," I replied. "Don't worry about the weapons," I went on, "we will help you and the people themselves know where to find them."

"You are right," said Gogo, "there will be no lack of boldness and courage. The people can hardly wait to see Tirana free."

"Of course," I continued, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, "this is a very delicate and extremely important matter which can be discussed only in the party regional committee. We shall launch the attack on Tirana only when we are convinced that it is essential, that we are sure of victory and, most important,

for the moment, only if the allies land in Albania in order to present themselves as liberators. We appreciate their war, but we alone have been and are the true liberators in Albania and we shall have power in our hands alone."

After Gogo and I had discussed these problems in detail he set off immediately for Tirana to present everything which we talked about to the party regional committee, so that the people and the guerrilla units would be mobilized and ready if it was decided to launch the attack for the liberation of the capital.

Meanwhile, a number of battalions and ceta, apart from the forces of the group of Peza and the 3d shock brigade which was in the process of formation, had been brought into the zone around Tirana for this purpose. Likewise, we gave the order for the 1st shock brigade to be deployed in the zone around Tirana and Elbasan, cutting the communication routes between the cities and attacking the Nazi convoys. The partisan forces under the command of Haxhi Lleshi were also to take part in the assault on Tirana after the liberation of Kruja. Besides this, we called on the Italian Army to surrender to the partisan command, to take to the mountains in the war against Nazism and to refuse to continue in the service of the Germans because it would end up in their concentration camps. We made this known to them by means of appeals and through our comrades whom we sent to talk with them, because, of course, at that time, we did not possess radio transmitters. Some of the Italians responded to our appeal.

Thus, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on, with the capitulation of Italy a number of Italian units, indeed, even one division, the Firenze division, commanded by General Azzi, surrendered to us. Our forces disarmed the division and were ordered to send Azzi and his whole staff to Arbana. I received them there and after the usual greetings, I spoke about the changes and the situation in the government of Mussolini's Italy, which Badoglio had taken over, as well as the situation of the Italian Army and the Italian command. I also told General Azzi that, in my opinion, the Italians who had surrendered to us should take the honourable road to atone for their sins and mistakes by taking part with us in the war against the Germans.

Amongst other things I said to him, "We can sign a joint declaration calling on the other Italian forces that still have not surrendered to unite with us. After this we should ask them individually and let those who wish to fight keep their rifles, while those who do not wish to fight should surrender their weapons and go to our liberated zones and work there together with the peasants to produce their own food and to assist the war."

Thus, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, after a stern and bloody war which lasted for several years our small but valiant and indomitable people, mobilized and led by our Communist Party, managed to conquer the hordes of the Italian empire and triumph over them. Triumphant as they were, however, our people displayed towards the erst-while killers and occupiers the qualities of a great people: Those who wanted to make amends for their evil deeds and contribute to the war against Nazi-fascism, they accepted as comrades-in-arms, while to the others who did not take this honourable course, the doors of the houses and cottages in the villages were opened and the people protected them from the Nazi fury until the war was over.

In particular, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, I want to point out that during this period a structure of our organs of power, from the suburb, village, city and regional councils to the National Liberation General Council and its standing committee, was set up over virtually the whole country. In the liberated regions and cities, the national liberation councils became the sole organs of power which administered and governed on behalf of the National Liberation Front and the interests of the people. They brought life back to normal, ran the economy, and education, saw to the provision of supplies for the people, carried out propaganda and organized the collection of aid for the movement and the sending of volunteers to the detachments of the National Liberation Army which was dealing ceaseless blows at the new Nazi enemy. This was the general test of the new state which was emerging in the heat of the war. Good reports reached us from all over the country about the work and struggle of our comrades, the enthusiasm of the people and their determination to proceed on the course that the party showed them.

[18 Nov 84]

[Text] Part V

The sabotaging aims of the allies regarding the results of the National Liberation War, the establishment of the people's state power and the triumph of the revolution. The support they gave to the reaction, Legaliteti, Balli Kombetar and Zogite elements. The people were for their power and supported the party with all the forces.

Tirana, 18 November (ATA)--In continuation of his book with memoirs and historical notes, "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania," Comrade Enver Hoxha writes about the extensive work done by the party to strengthen the power and the national liberation councils, to extend the armed struggle against the foreign occupiers. He writes also about the sabotaging aims of the allies who supported the whole reaction in and outside the country in order to prevent the achievement of the final victory, writes on the development of the proceedings of the historic Congress of Permet and its important decisions, etc.

--The support of the allies for the reaction, Legaliteti--nest of criminals, tool of the occupier and local and foreign reaction.

Through uninterrupted struggle and activity Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on, with keen vigilance and a correct and consistent stand in every step, we were successfully passing one difficult test after another in the situation created after the 2d Conference of Labinot. It was becoming clear to everybody that the authority of the National Liberation Movement had greatly increased and, in this context, the national liberation councils were not only capable of holding the reins of the country, of acting and dictating in the name of the people, but, more important, were determined not to allow anybody to threaten or damage the victories achieved.

Precisely at these moments, in the midst of all this work, we were to be faced with a new threat and a fresh effort of reaction to attack us on all fronts, to divide the people and to rob them of what had been achieved through struggle.

We were in Arbana when we received a leaflet issued by a "Zogite national party," unheard of up till those moments, but signed by such "well-known" Bayraktars as Fiqiri Dine, Muharrem Bajraktari, Myftar Kaloshi, Abaz Kupi and others. Through this leaflet the "Zogite national party," freshly cooked up in the secret kitchens of reaction, proclaimed its existence and gave "the masses" the sensational news: "The star of the nation," the despot Ahmet Zog, had not yet set. He was alive and living well in England and, moreover, he was holding talks and preparing plans for "liberation" with Mr Churchill himself, and the British Intelligence Service was mobilized to find where those wretched Opinga, which the sovereign was not able to put on in April of 1939, had been lost. Hence, let the nation rejoice, shouted the "Zogite national party," because the saviour will land (from the skies by British balloons) and until the Opinga are found all patriots and people must unite around the party of the August monarch to fight (of course, against the National Liberation Front and movement), because we are sure of the future: The monarchy and the monarch.

In commenting briefly to the comrades who were in Arbana, that day on this leaflet and its asinine content Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, I said:

"This whole thing is evidence of a manoeuvre hatched up against us by internal and external reaction. Convinced that they have achieved nothing with the Balli Kombetar, now the reactionaries have started to exhume Ahmet Zog from the grave, to powder and perfume his corpse in order to create the impression that the monarchy and the monarch were and still are legitimate and in power in Albania. The point is quite plain: There is no reason to create another state power in Albania, no reason to recognize the national liberation councils. Hence: struggle against them in the name of the monarchy, and not struggle against the occupiers in the name of Albania."

After this, having discussed the problem and thrashed it out thoroughly, we instructed all the organizations of the party in the regions, and especially in Tirana, about the clear-cut and consistent stand which must be maintained towards the Zogites.

At the same time, we instructed both the organizations of the party and the national liberation councils that the struggle against the Zogites and the chiefs of the Balli Kombetar should not in any way be taken or treated as a separate struggle or as the main one for us.

"A new enemy, German Nazism, has occupied our homeland," we instructed the comrades, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, "therefore, we must concentrate all our forces against the occupiers, and, along with the occupiers, also against the Ballist and Zogite traitors who collaborate with them. We must not forget that the strings were pulled in London to bring the 'Zogites' on the scene, but they might also have been pulled in the corridors of the German Gestapo. The Nazis are striving to implant and encourage the split, to deceive us so that we concentrate the war against the local reactionary groups and parties that pop up and wither like toadstools. Therefore, vigilance and prudence, if the fire on our land burns up the Nazis, their tools, the local brigands, will be burnt up along with them."

But, as in the case of the Balli Kombetar, with Legaliteti, too, reaction had reckoned without the host Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, as I have said right from the outset we discovered and correctly defined the reactionary character and aims of this grouping and immediately opposed it everywhere with our line of exposure and open attack. Both from the correct stand which our party adopted immediately and because of the universal hatred which the masses of the people had for the time of the Zogite regime, Legaliteti never established any solid roots. It remained mostly a grouping of chiefs, agents of the British and the old regime, supported by gangs of brigands, in the forefront of which were the mercenary forces of Abaz Kupa and a few other Bayraktar chiefs.

Meanwhile, the emergence of Legaliteti on the scene, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues to quickly confirm what we had foreseen: The upset and division in the ranks of the "heads of the nation," especially among a number of elements of the Balli Kombetar, clear that the Balli Kombetar had lost all hope of success and now, frightened by the possibility of the reappearance of Zog, various pseudo-nationalist elements were finally obliged to turn their eyes to the National Liberation Front and were agonizing over the step which they had to take. Indeed, they sent word to our comrades in Tirana that they had in mind to break away from the Balli Kombetar, to form a "democratic party." to join the front as a party to recognize the councils and take part in the armed struggle against the occupier.

"In brief Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, our stand is and remains this: If they want to and are capable of doing so, let them create their own party and call it what they like, but we have told them and tell them again: if they truly want to fight there is no reason to waste their time with talk about parties then join the front either individually or in groups, Begin the fight and we shall respect them, just as we shall demand that they, either as individuals or as parties, recognize and respect not only the independence of the Communist Party in the front, but also the leading role which our party has won through colossal struggle and efforts."

As I said, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues our stand towards and struggle against the Ballist and Zogite reaction were not a "separate struggle" but constituent parts of the great and stern war which we were waging every hour and every day against the Nazi foreign invaders who immediately, after the capitulation of Italy, poured into Albania with all their savagery.

As we had expected, the new occupiers began to accompany the military occupation of the country with feverish demagogic propaganda. Then the Quislings and the Ballists and their propaganda began to make interpretations of the fundamental "theses" of this demagogy, trying in this way to draw a veil over their shameful collaboration with the new occupiers. The plans of "ethnic Albania" were brought out again from the drawers and strong-rooms of the Italian occupiers, the army and the gendarmerie of the "sovereign" Albanian state were concocted, and so on.

The new occupiers did not hasten to set up a government immediately, but established a provisional executive committee headed by Ibrahim Bicaku and, as soon as they gathered some of the "fathers of the nation" in a so-called assembly, they created the regency, with Mehdi Frasheri, whom they brought by aircraft from Rome, Lef Nosi, Father Anton Harapi and Fuat Dibra. We sent Omer Nishani to Tirana in an effort to draw Mehdi Frasheri into the national liberation movement but this traitor had made up his mind to do the dirty work for the Germans in return for the money they paid him.

The Balli Kombetar was integrated openly into the repressive apparatus which the occupier set up, the finest buildings in the towns were placed at the disposal of the Balli Kombetar, its regional committees sent recommendations to the Quisling organs about the people who should be given jobs, etc. The open German-Ballist collaboration with arms would not be long delayed, either. At this time the Quisling-Ballist propaganda activized all its forces.

Comrade Enver Hoxha writes about information he had received in October 1943 from the comrades of the party regional committee of Tirana regarding the convening of a traitor assembly under the aegis of the occupiers, as well as the decision taken to attack the assembly with artillery. Further on, he writes:

On the morning of 18 October 1943 the place in which the "fathers of the nation" had gathered was shelled from the hills of Tirana, while the leaflet which the party issued echoed the enthusiasm of the people: how do the people reply to the assembly of the Gestapo? With cannon."

While declaring all-out war against the Balli Kombetar with propaganda and with weapons, the Central Committee instructed the organizations of the party in the terrain and in the army that even after this, they should act with care and prudence towards those elements who had not stained their hands with blood and proved able to understand the course on which they had been misled through ignorance, the influences of the past and political nativity. The efforts to pull the misled and the deceived out of the mire of treachery must never cease. In no way should the criminals of the Balli Kombetar be treated on the same basis as the misled long-suffering poor peasants who followed them. In general, this policy was followed and gave results, many of these misled elements realized in time where the mule of the Balli Kombetar and other traitors was carrying them, broke with them and made amends for their mistake by fighting alongside the people. As I said, the same stand as toward the Quisling Balli Kombetar, was adopted towards its British style Quisling sister, Legaliteti. In the direction of this "party," however, there was still something left undone: One of its chiefs, Abaz Kupi, had to render account for his betrayal of the front, the General Council and the general staff of our army.

While we were waiting to meet Abaz Kupi, he was received assurances from the Gestapo and the Wehrmacht, from Mehdi Frasheri, from Davies and McLean, strengthening his links with the chiefs of the Balli Kombetar and even organizing the "congress of the Zogite party" which took "decisions" about the future of Albania.

I have described how the conversation developed in the book, the Anglo-American threat to Albania, and shall not dwell on it. There I have spoken about Bazi's absurd theses that he was allegedly the first to begin the war, that he had liberated Kruja and his megalomaniacal claim that all the parties (read: the National Liberation Front) should amalgamate in "the party of his majesty," etc, etc. In the end, after we warned him that if he dared to act against our forces he would be wiped out together with his pack of followers, this "great man" was frightened and left, saying, "I don't annoy anyone if they don't annoy me." Thus, we finally broke with Bazi Canes: (Abaz Kupi, ed note) and the fate of him and his associates was that of all the traitors: they joined up completely with the detachments of the Nazi occupiers in order through them to secure support during the war and power after the war (without failing to make deals with the British, too).

Naturally, for the period of the war, this uniting under arms of reaction and the foreign occupiers was to increase our difficulties and the blood our comrades would have to shed, but this same act would make matters somewhat easier for us in the future when we liberated Albania: The differentiation between the people and reaction, between the oppressed and oppressor classes, had reached its culmination. We would settle accounts with the exploiters more easily, and so it turned out. Indeed, from those moments we began to settle accounts radically: some of the reactionaries were killed in the battles with our forces, others took to their heels on the eve of liberation together with the Germans, and others again were captured by our forces and were condemned by the people's courts for the crimes they had committed. Abaz Kupa himself adhered to the principle of "taking to his heels" and with the aid of the British managed to get away in order to embrace the "brilliant star" of the nation in exile.

--The decision to hold the 1st antifascist congress of Permet.

The enemies' hopes of destroying the National Liberation Movement and wiping out its leadership through the winter offensive of 1943-1944 "by the time the new leaves burst their buds," were smashed by the heroic resistance of the people and our army. Fighting in difficult conditions, in grave situations, the front, the army and the national liberation councils had not only safeguarded their existence but had tempered themselves politically and militarily, had increased their ranks and had accumulated valuable experience.

Above all, it was essential that along with stepping of the attack on the Nazi hordes and their collaborators, we should do everything to arrive at the liberation of the country as well prepared politically as possible. This meant that we had to concretize the great victories achieved and sanction them in laws and forms approved by the people. The moment had come when the slogan of our National Liberation War, "for a free, democratic, people's Albania," had to be concretized. Such decisions which, of course, the leadership of the CPA and the anti-fascist General Council would discuss and define, could be finally taken and sanctioned only by a broad meeting, a great national assembly of representatives of the Albanian people, which would express the aspirations and desires of the people. Thus, the need arose for the preparation of the 1st anti-fascist congress of Permet.

After thoroughly discussing in the political bureau the idea about holding the 1st anti-fascist congress, we decided to present it to the Standing Committee of the National Liberation General Council at a meeting organized on 15 April 1944 at Helmes.

In essence, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, I said to the comrades, "Today our National Liberation Movement is recognized in Albania and throughout the world as the only political and military power which represents the supreme interests of the Albanian nation. We have won this recognition through our correct policy, through the heroic struggle of the party and our people. Now, in the circumstances of the new, higher stage which our National Liberation War has entered, the leadership of the CPA has arrived at the conclusion that it is essential to have higher organizational forms in our movement and, above all, to have a legislative assembly and a provisional government. In

order to secure these it is necessary to organize a congress of representatives of the Albanian people who will freely decide on the future of the homeland, transmitting the desire of the people who have elected them. Within the country the congress will have a major political effect and the people will applaud its decisions, because they have been fighting for these things for 4 years. "Likewise," I stressed, "its echo will be great outside the country, too, and will have an influence on our relations with the allies. The congress will provide the country with its lawful government and with this. It will put an end both to the manoeuvres of internal reaction and to the underhand work of the allies."

The comrades received by speech with enthusiasm, and in their contributions to the discussion unanimously approved the proposal for summoning the congress, as well as the procedure for the election of the delegates.

One of the first invitations which we sent out in the name of the standing committee of the National Liberation General Council Comrade Enver Hoxha writes was that which was sent to the Standing Committee of the National Liberation General Council of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, our brothers with whom we were linked not only by the common ideals of the war, but also by language, blood and nationality. In the invitation signed by Omer Nishani we wrote to our Kosova brothers about the decision of great historic importance which we had taken for the calling of an anti-fascist national congress, which would mark a new stage in our war, and expressed the desire that a delegation of the council and of the main staff of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau should come to this congress. "The coming of that delegation," we wrote, "will be the most vivid indication to the congress of how our traditions of the war for freedom bring us together with our brothers."

We waited for the representatives of the National Liberation Movement of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau until the day the congress has due to start, and still hoped that they might come during the days when the congress was in progress, but in vain. We do not know what happened, but no delegation or reply reached us.

In brief, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, all measures were taken to ensure that everything would go like clock-work. Meanwhile, we made the necessary preparations and in the middle of May 1944 summoned the plenum of the Central Committee of the CPA, which, among the main problems, discussed and decided on the matters which would be raised at the congress of permit, the decisions which the party would propose should be taken there, and so on, considering this event a key moment in the course of our work for the deepening of victories and the prospect of the development of the revolution which the party was leading.

According to the decision of the Standing Committee of the General Council the liberated zones and those that were still occupied, the battalions and bridges of the army, the anti-fascist youth union and the anti-fascist women's union would be represented at the congress. In the liberated regions the delegates to the congress would be elected democratically by the people by open vote, while in the occupied zones the delegates would be appointed by the National Liberation Council of the respective region.

Great secrecy was maintained about the town in which the congress was to be held, so that the enemy would not be able to organize a mass attack against Permet Comrade Enver Hoxha continues.

It was not by chance that the 1st anti-fascist congress of the Albanian people was to be held in Permet and not in some other place Comrade Enver Hoxha continues. We had decided this when we were in Helmes. We could have met in other places, but we chose Permet for two main reasons: First, in order to show the people that the party and the National Liberation Army were on the verge of victory, that our war had now passed into the phase of the liberation of cities, that victory was imminent and we were able to hold such a great congress of historic importance not only in the mountains but also in the cities. Apart from this, I proposed Permet because it included Dangelia, Frasher, where the most outstanding and glorious men of our national renaissance were born. The party honoured the great patriots who were born on the soil of Permet, Naim, Sami and Abdyl, the great poet, the great philosopher and the great politician.

"Why do we need Skanderbeg or Naim Frasheri. They were feudal," said "the proletarian conscience" of the party, Koci Xoxe who, as was to be proved later, through his savage, sectarian, Trotskyite policy, was for the destruction of the front.

"They were great fighters for Albania," I told him Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. "Their names and deeds will remain in the popular memory through the centuries. We communists are the continuers of their work in new times."

--The Congress of Permet--one of the most important events in the history of the National Liberation War.

I always remember with nostalgia the Permet of May 1944, with its festive appearance, the decorated congress hall, the clean dining-room with long tables, the comrades whose rifle barrels clicked together when they embraced one another. All these things challenged the ruins caused by the war and filled our hearts with great joy. In my mind's eye I can see the comrades, young as they were at that time, vigorous, laughing, enthusiastic, remember Hysni Kapo, a steel pillar of the party and the National Liberation War, Babe Myslim, the wise, loyal and valiant fighter, Gogo Nushi, sparing with his words but a tireless worker. I remember my other cofighters and collaborators of the wartime years, Spiro Moisiu, Medar Shtylla, Doctor Nishani, Esat Dishnica, Hasan Pulo and many, many others who made their contribution to the brilliant course on which the party led us.

When I remember Permet of those heroic days I seem to become much younger than I am today when I am writing these lines.

On 24 May 1944, amidst the enthusiasm of the people and the partisans, the delegates and the invited guests entered the historic hall in which the proceedings of the congress were to be held. We, the comrades of the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist National Liberation General Council and the general staff, entered the hall at 1:00 o'clock. The delegates and guests, old people and youth, partisans and commanders, women, clergy, patriots, welcomed us with a long ovation and we all stood and cheered together.

I had taken part, spoken in and chaired important meetings and conferences of the party, the front and the state power for 4 years on end, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses on all these occasions, together with the confidence and determination which the strength of the party and the war gave me, I had also felt profound emotions, but the emotions which I felt on this occasion, while I was making ready to deliver the report, were of a special quality and I shall never forget them.

However, the prolonged applause and ovations of the delegates, their uninterrupted enthusiastic shouts gave me time to pull myself together and my voice resounded with that assurance and strength which this great event required.

"The Communist Party of Albania placed the lives of its members and everything it had in the service of the homeland and the people," I declared at the congress, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, "it became the organizer and true leader in the armed insurrection against the occupier and the most rabid reaction, it has always stood in the forefront of the war and has striven to unite the masses of the people and all honest nationalists and patriots in a common front against the occupiers."

This declaration which was received with enthusiastic cheering reflected an indisputable historical fact. Even before this, during the war, we had spoken about the role of the Communist Party, about its leadership in the front and the National Liberation Army, and more importantly, applied this in practice. Now, however, it was of great importance to affirm the party as the decisive factor of the victory at such a great event as the congress of Permet. With this, in principle and practice, we reaffirmed and safeguarded the leading role of the party for the future.

In my report I went on to speak about the efforts of reaction to undermine and sabotage the National Liberation War, to alienate the people from the party and the front. In this part of the report, too, I gave an historic account of the forms which this hostile activity had followed, of the demagogic tactics of reactionary and collaborationist groupings from the open Quislings like Kruja, Verlaci, Bushati and Libohova, to the Balli Kombetar, Abaz Kupa and Legaliteti, and the new Quislings like Mehdi Frasheri, Ibrahim Bicaku and others. The report proved their treachery with arguments and facts. As a "fresh" fact I mentioned the efforts of reaction to enter into alliance with Balkan reaction, not only to strangle our war, but also to sell the homeland to the chauvinists of neighbouring countries.

During those days we had captured authentic documents which proved such a thing and we displayed these in a corner of the hall where the congress was held. Amongst them was a letter signed by the "chairman of the Ballist Central Committee," Mithat Frasheri, sent to the renegade Dhimiter Fallo in which the latter was instructed to reach agreement with the other members of a "commission" which was to hold talks with representatives of Greek reaction. This so-called commission was comprised of fallo, representing the Balli Kombetar, Khavit Leskoviku, representing the Quisling government, Koco Kota representing "the Zogite party" and they had even dug up "representatives of Kosova." Amongst the captured documents were passports freshly issued by the

Quisling government, a letter of recommendation signed by the "foreign minister," Bahri Omari, to the "friendly government," as well as a letter setting out eight or nine "points" on which the "agreement" with the Greek reactionaries was to be achieved. According to these "points," the Balli Kombetar, amongst other things, agreed that the Albanian armed forces should be amalgamated with the reactionary Greek forces in a joint army, commanded by the Greeks, which would be employed to suppress the national liberation movements in Albania and in Greece. What is more, these traitors had expressed their readiness to sign an accord with the Greek Government in Cairo to give Greece the so-called northern Epirus, to place our country under the rule of the Greek monarchy, with "autonomous" rights, that is, to sell the homeland to the Greek chauvinists.

Like all the others, however, this "card," too, was burnt in the hands of reaction, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses. And it was burnt not only because we discovered their filthy deal over the future of the homeland in time, but because now such games no longer had any value. They were unable to turn a people who had risen to their feet and had their own Communist Party as their leadership, from their course. We immediately gave Dhimiter Fallo the sentence he deserved as a traitor and criminal and executed him in the middle of Korca, to the great dismay of the Quislings and reaction who covered the walls of Korca with posters about his "murder" and ordered that his funeral should be conducted with "majestic solemnity" and "at the expense of the municipal council." Subsequently, after liberation, Xhavit Leskoviku and the former Zogite prime minister, Koco Kota, whom our people found where he was hiding also rendered account and the two of them together, along with other criminals, were placed in the dock in the people's court.

After my expose of our war against the occupiers and traitors I went on to deal with the question of the measures and decisions necessary for the liberation and future of the country in the light of international events.

"The situation today is such that our people, who have suffered, made sacrifices and shed their blood, should have a state system which will ensure them their freedom and genuine democracy," I stressed amongst other things in the report, and in this context, I presented the tasks which the historic congress of Permet had to accomplish.

"It is the duty of the delegates to this congress, chosen by the sovereign will of the people and who represent all the strata of our society, I said on this issue," to take the proper measures for waging the war through to victory and to ensure the future of the homeland. It delves upon our congress to establish political, legislative and executive organs which will be able to overcome any obstacle which may emerge for them, will represent the Albanian people properly, both inside the outside Albania, and be able to prevent any attempt, from whatever direction it is made, intended to hinder the realization of the desires for which our people are fighting and shedding so much blood in this great liberation war."

The delegates greeted the conclusion of the report which I delivered at the congress of Permet with prolonged applause and cheering, thus expressing their

revolutionary optimism, joy, and determination to forge ahead on the road which the party showed us, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

Further on, Comrade Enver Hoxha describes in the book the great enthusiasm of the delegates and their contributions, which continued for about 2 days.

Comrade Enver Hoxha writes about the contribution by Comrade Hysni Kapo, who spoke among others about the birth and extension of the armed struggle of the Albanian people, stressing the fact that it was the Communist Party of Albania which had united the people and aroused them to fight. He mentions also the contribution by Spiro Moisiu, who pointed out the strength of the National Liberation Army, its organisation, equipment and armaments, which were secured solely by capturing them from the enemy, because the "aid" of the allies has amounted to almost nothing, the contribution by Doctor Medar Shtylla, who spoke about the progressive traditions and ceaseless efforts of the Albanian people for freedom and popular justice. Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on about the contribution by Myslim Peza, who pointed out that the road of the war is the right road of the people, the road of the party, as well as the contribution by Haxhi Lleshi, who stressed that the congress represents the whole Albanian people, therefore all of us will recognize its decisions, will recognize the new government because it is their government. The British mission, he stressed, has assisted reaction, that is why we are going to describe them as reactionaries, too, because we are allies with the peoples, but not with those who assist reaction.

Further on Comrade Enver Hoxha speak in the book about the contribution by Mustafa Gjinishi and underlines that in it there were clearly seen the desperate attempts of the secret agent, but his tactics had no value anymore.

In continuation, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes:

The delegates listened with enthusiasm to the contribution of the delegate of the Greek minority in Albania, who spoke about the correct leadership of the Communist Party of Albania, which united the people and made them brothers and gave the meambers of the Greek minority the same rights as the fraternal Albanian people.

Nexhmije Xhuglini, a delegate of the anti-fascist youth union, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, spoke about the war and the efforts of the Albanian youth, who under the leadership of the Communist Party, grew up, were educated and became a great force in the war for liberation.

The continuation of the war through to victory, the election of the National Liberation Council and the anti-fascist committee and other decisions of national importance were discussed by many delegates, who with their words raised the enthusiasm to an even higher level. The delegate from Vlora, Hasan Pulo, made such a contribution in concrete and simple terms. On behalf of the people of this district he demanded the coming of a Soviet military mission in Albania.

This Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses was a long-standing desire of ours which had its source in our love for the homeland of the giants of the revolution, Lenin and Stalin, for the first socialist country, and especially for the Soviet Army which had heroically withstood the Hitlerite attack and now, guided by the Stalinist military art, was crushing the Nazi beast and driving it back towards its lair, Germany. The coming of a Soviet military mission would be a joy for the people and our army. We had British missions in Albania, but these were uninvited guests who we were obliged to accept from the respect which was due to our allies, while the Soviet officers would not be official guests but friends we could welcome wholeheartedly. Nevertheless, during the days when the congress of Permet was being held, by chance a Soviet officer was present at our general staff and we had invited him to take part in the congress. He expressed the desire to say a few words of greeting to the congress and we fulfilled his desire.

"This congress shows the world once again that the peoples oppressed criticism have risen to fight," he said.

He spoke about the Soviet society which knew no oppression and exploitation, about the heroic war against the Nazi hordes, and went on to give a brief account of the victories of the Red Army which was at the gates of the Balkans.

"Only those peoples who fight rank raise their voices for freedom, only they deserve to live," he said in conclusion, "your congress shows that the Albanian people know that freedom is gained only by fighting for it."

After 2 days of discussion, stresses Comrade Enver Hoxha further on in the book, on 26 May, we went on to the next phase of the proceedings of the congress--the election of legislative and executive organs of our people's state power. This was an historic moment with decisive importance for the fate of the homeland and the people, the crowning of the people's war for freedom and people's Albania. The moment had come when with the will of the Albanian people, the foundations had to be laid of a new state which would fight for the fundamental interests of the popular masses, of workers, peasants and the patriotic intelligentsia. The anti-fascist council, which would be our first constituent assembly, and the committee, with the competences of a government, would not be the outcome of combinations of European chancelleries, or ghosts of the past, which the imperialist powers maintained and subsidized in order to use them against peoples who hated them.

Doctor Nishani went on to explain to the delegates Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, the procedure for the elections, spoke about the number of the members of the council, and so on. It was proposed that a commission comprised of comrades with authority and well-known if the war should be appointed to nominate the candidates who would be presented to the congress.

Mehmet Shehu, the delegate from the 1st shock brigade, too arrogant to stand up, spoke first.

"I am going to make some proposals which perhaps may be accepted. I think that the members of the General Council and the general staff should be elected to the commission and a few of us, from the mob...."

This person's dose of conceit was mixed with the sense of discontent which was simmering within him. His opinion of himself was so great that he scorned and underrated other modest members of the party and comrades of the war, whom he scornfully described as the "mob," that is, an amorphous worthless mass destined to approve the opinions and decisions of others. In his own opinion, Mehmet Shehu thought that he had not been given his due, because we had left him among the "mob," despite the fact that he had been elected as a candidate member of the plenum of the Central Committee and had been appointed a brigade commander, but Mehmet Shehu wanted more, both to satisfy his own ambition and to carry out the instructions of his patrons. During those days I was to have a separate talk with him about such expressions of conceit and other mistakes, during which I criticized him sternly and there and then he made a "strong self-criticism," as was his custom. But let us not "interrupt" the proceedings of the session.

After about two hours of discussion the commission compiled a list of 115 candidates, we returned to the hall, and the session recommenced, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. Doctor Nishani read through the list twice and gave explanations about each of the candidates proposed, while they stood up in turn and "were introduced" to the comrades. In general, all the candidates proposed were approved by the delegates, and this was natural, because we had had in mind that those to be elected to the council should be honest patriots, whether communists or not, militants of the National Liberation War, who had distinguished themselves in their work and struggle in the terrain and in the army.

At this meeting, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on, the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council took very important decisions: about the functions and tasks of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council, its Standing Committee and the Anti-fascist National Liberation Committee, about preventing the return of Zog to Albania, about awarding badges of rank in the National Liberation Army. With the competences and prerogatives with which it was charged, the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council, or ANLC as it was called for short, would be the supreme legislative organ of the new Albanian state. It was the assembly, our people's assembly, in the time of the war and the first months of liberation, until general elections were held in Albania for the constituent assembly, which, carrying on the work of the ANLC, would finally settle the question of the form of the regime, appoint the new government and adopt the constitution.

The Anti-fascist National Liberation Committee was approved unanimously with the following composition: chairman and in charge of the war and national defence, Enver Hoxha, vice-chairman; Myslim Peza, member in charge of internal affairs; Haxhi Lleshi, in charge of foreign affairs; Dr Omer Nishani, in charge of the economy; Dr Medar Shtylla, in charge of the reconstruction; Bedri Spahiu, in charge of justice; Manol Konomi, in charge of finance; Ramadan Citaku, in charge of the press and propaganda; Sejfulla Maleshova, in charge of education; Gjergj Kokoshi, in charge of public works; Eng Spiro Koleka, in charge of health, Dr Ymer Dishnica.

The next day, 28 May Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, was the day of the closing of the Anti-fascist Congress of Permet. The final session at which the historic decisions of the Albanian people would be approved was left for the afternoon, in the evening the delegates would celebrate together with the patriotic and hospitable people of Permet, would say their farewells and on the morning of the following day each of them would set out for the place to which his duty to the homeland called him.

In the afternoon, when we entered the hall the delegates who had taken their seats and were singing in different groups, welcomed us with applause and ovations for the party, the front and the National Liberation Army. They did not stop for minutes on end however much Omer Nishani, who myself was very moved, called on the delegates for "order." In the end, when some "order" was abolished, the doctor declared the session opened and gave the floor to the secretary of the Standing Committee of the ANLC to read the draft decisions to which the congress was to give the final approval. The reading of the draft, which normally should have required an hour, took much longer because applause burst out after every decision, and even over separate clauses of the decisions. How could the delegates of this nation, who had fought for freedom and justice for centuries, not cheer wholeheartedly when they heard: "The new democratic people's Albania will be built according to the will of the people." In these decisions they saw the crowning of the long difficult war, the aim for which thousands of their comrades had shed their blood, had sacrificed their youth and their lives. They unanimously approved the decision that Ahmet Zog, the despot and traitor to the Albanian people, and his family would be prohibited from returning to Albania. When this decision was read, Omer Nishani who chaired the session, asked: "Does the congress approve?"

This time there was no clapping. The delegates expressed their opinion with shouts, "down with Zog" and stamping their feet. The congress also unanimously approved the other decisions about the refusal to recognize any other government which might be formed inside or outside the country, about the continuation more fiercely of the war against the occupiers, the Quislings, the Balli Kombetar, Legaliteti and any other reactionary group. The congress also endorsed the political line of the National Liberation General Council and the activity of the general staff of the National Liberation Army, and expressed the desire that military missions of the Soviet Union and the United States of America should be attached to it. Then, the other decisions of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council and its Standing Committee were read to the congress, including those about the reexamination and cancellation of all the enslaving political and economic agreements which Zog had made with other countries, about the functions and competences of the ANLC and its Standing Committee, etc, etc.

The decision of the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council about the appointment and composition of the anti-fascist committee with the functions of a provisional government was received by the delegates with applause and ovations.

Thus, with these decisions of historic importance, which opened a new brilliant epoch in the ancient history of the Albanian people, the anti-fascist

congress of Permet accomplished its historic mission with their clenched fists raised high, just as they saluted one another in the war for freedom, the delegates sealed a fundamental act which marked the birth of the new Albanian state and sketched the contours of the course on which Albania would proceed in the future. The whole revolutionary spirit of the congress of Permet, the experience of our National Liberation War, together with the historic decisions which were taken, were reflected in the declaration of the congress, which Sami Baholli read, and was applauded and approved unanimously.

This declaration, which was shown to be made known to the whole nation, summed up the war of the Albanian people since 7 April 1939 with its fundamental stages and moments, noted the anti-national and anti-popular role of the regime of Zog, the Quisling government and the Ballist, Zogite and other traitors and collaborationists, and strongly emphasized the role of the Communist Party as the leader and inspirer of the National Liberation War. In its analysis of the external factors, the declaration stressed the war of the Soviet peoples and the Red Army, under the leadership of Stalin, as the main factor in the victory of the peoples' anti-fascist coalition, and made a correct assessment of the war of the Anglo-Americans and that of the peoples of the Balkans.

Following the reading of the declaration and a number of messages, I, as chairman of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee, delivered the closing address.

Amongst other things, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes in a short speech I said: "This congress is one of the greatest successes of our movement, is the tribune at which the opinions and desires of the people have been freely expressed for the first time in Albania, at which decisions important to the fate of our homeland, to the development of the war and the creation of a happy future, have been taken.

"Conscious of the grave responsibility with which the Albanian people have entrusted us," I went on, "we shall place all our strength and our lives in the service of the people and the homeland and will remain loyal to the death to the will of our people for the achievement of an independent and democratic Albania.

"We shall take the decisions of this congress immediately to the people and, together with the people, will fight to apply them, not sparing even our lives, will mobilize all the active forces of the people and, united around the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council and Committee, hurl ourselves more vigorously into the fight to hasten the liberation of our people."

After my speech, all the delegates, one after the other, placed their signatures below the decisions which had been collected in the book of the congress, in that book in which in a symbolic way we put our signatures whenever we go to Permet on the anniversary of that glorious event.

Thus, the Congress of Permet, one of the most important events of our epic National Liberation War, a monument built by the war and the wisdom of the

party and the people, a great deed with colossal importance for the future of Albania, came to a close.

At Permet, Albania, led by its heroic Communist Party, demonstrated to friends and enemies that it was unwavering on its correct course. Accounts could no longer be made as in the past. Those times had gone never to return. History would never again be repeated as the enemies wished: the people had become masters of their own fate.

Now the party and the people Comrade Enver Hoxha writes saw with justified pride how our heroic army had grown and been strengthened in the fire of the war for freedom and had become dear to the people and a terror to the enemy. At this period there were shock brigades, most of which had been formed after the enemy's general winter offensive, as well as scores of regular territorial battalions, ceta and units, at the head of which were tested commanders, commissars and other political and military cadres such as Hysni Kapo, Shefqet Peci, Adil Carcani, Haki Toska, Manush Myftiu, Ramiz Alia, Rita Marko, Teki Kolaneci, Jaho Gjoliku and tens of others, functioning and carrying out powerful military operations in our country.

The ranks of our fighting formations were ceaselessly filled with sons and daughters of the people, and even with the more elderly, a thing which spoke clearly of the strength and indisputable authority which our liberation army enjoyed among the people. Not only was it smashing the Nazi and Ballist forces everywhere and liberating cities and whole districts and zones one after the other, but also, with even greater force than before, it was playing a very great role in strengthening the national liberation councils, ensuring that they functioned in the best possible way, in defending and affirming the new state power which had now taken the reins of Albania firmly in hand.

--The 1st congress of the organization of the Albanian anti-fascist youth union--a major events now only for the youth but also for the party.

Precisely in the upsurge of all this work the party decided that the 1st congress of the organization of the Albanian anti-fascist youth union should be held. This was a major event, not only for the youth, but also for the party and our whole people, because the youth were the most vigorous and active force in the war and tomorrow, after liberation, this indomitable and organized army would play an irreplaceable role in the whole life of the country, in the reconstruction, in the political field and in the government, educated in the spirit of lofty patriotism, always the militant reserve of the party, the youth would take over and carry forward the banner of our revolution unprecedented in the history of our people.

Precisely because we considered this event so important, we, the leading comrades of the party, the anti-fascist committee and the standing committee of the party, the anti-fascist committee and the Standing Committee, who had re-established ourselves in Helmes, despite the great amount of work we had to do, spent those days with our revolutionary young men and women.

The congress was to be held at Helmes, in a beautiful meadow above the village. These were happy days full of work. Nako and Nexhmije prepared the report which afterwards we looked over together. The other comrades of the youth organization were preparing to welcome the delegates and all, including us "older" ones, were eagerly awaiting the day when the congress was to open. The youth delegates arrived from all parts of the country. They came from the military detachments, from the ceta for amongst the civilian population, legal and illegal workers, all youthful ardor and vigour, with great love for and loyal to the party and the National Liberation War.

On 8 August, the day when the congress began, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, I left Helmes in the morning together with Doctor Nishani and other comrades and we climbed up to the beautiful meadow of Lirez which resounded with songs and cheers for the Communist Party of Albania. All the delegates, happy, smiling and full of joy, opened a way for us, lining up on both sides of the road, and we passed between them as though we were reviewing a guard of honour comprised of young men and women partisans standing facing one another, saluting arms. We took our places on the rostrum of the congress along with comrades of the leadership of the youth organization such as Nako Spiru, Ramiz Alia, Nexhmije Xhuglini, Alqi Kondi, Tasi Mitrusha and others.

There was a moment of expectant silence which was broken when the voice of a young man rang out, full of emotion, which affected all of us.

"Comrades," he said, "in the name of all the delegates, who represent the youth of the liberated and unliberated zones, and all the detachments of our army, I welcome to the congress of the youth the main leaders of the Communist Party, the army and our new state. In expressing our heartfelt thanks to them, let me say that we consider their participation in the congress a great honour, encouragement and assistance for the younger generation of Albania."

This young man, still slim in build, but with keen eyes and fiery words, was Comrade Ramiz Alia. I met him personally for the first time at Helmes, although, you might say, we had long been acquainted at a distance. The comrades, especially Nako and Nexhmije, had spoken to me about Ramiz with respect and sympathy, as a skilful and militant young comrade who had distinguished himself, initially in Tirana, and especially in the organization and leadership of the committee and organization of the youth of the region of Berat. Two months earlier I had received a letter from him, which struck me immediately for the competence with which he raised problems of the political work and work with the youth in the 7th shock brigade, in which right from the outset, he had been charged with the duties of comrades responsible for the youth organization and work in the political section of the brigade. In my reply I congratulated him and transmitted the advice and instructions of the leadership of the party to carry forward the work for the education of the youth. At that time Ramiz was quite young but with clear and mature opinions, a militant type and with initiative, qualities which he displayed again in the days when the proceedings of the congress took place. At Helmes the delegates elected him a member of the leadership of the Albanian anti-fascist youth union and from then on, through ceaseless work and fruitful activity, he was to advance further on the road he had taken as one of the main leaders

of the youth, and subsequently of the party, and we were to be linked together in a close collaboration and friendship which is based on our work for the triumph of the ideal of the party.

Delivering a message of greetings to the congress, on behalf of the Central Committee of the party, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on. I spoke to the representatives of the youth about the great trust which the party has always placed in the heroic younger generation of Albania and made a high assessment of the great contribution of the youth in the war for freedom, and went on to point out:

"New battles await us to construct the homeland, to strengthen the democratic state power, to set our Albania on the road to happiness. Therefore, you young men and women of Albania who today are in the forefront of the gigantic struggle for the freedom of the homeland, from these moments on must always be in the forefront of the work for the reconstruction of the country, for the elimination of its backwardness, for the defense and flowering of this soil which we are watering with our blood."

The delegates welcomed my greeting on behalf of the Central Committee with ovations. With their enthusiastic cheers and shouts as well as in their contributions to the discussion, they expressed their love for the unshakable confidence in the Communist Party and their determination to forge ahead unwaveringly on its course.

[19 Nov 84]

[Text] Part VI

The party and the people, in unity with one another, refuted and foiled the hostile plans of the Anglo-Americans and of the Titoites in collaboration with the reaction and the antiparty elements. The provisional people's democratic government, a government that emerged from the people.

Tirana, 19 November (ATA)--At the Berat meeting the antifascist National Liberation Committee is transformed into provisional people's democratic government. Decisions of historic importance for the fates of the Albanian people.

It was quite obvious that the autumn of 1944 would be the last season of the occupation in Albania, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha further on in the book. The whole south had been liberated, together with the big main towns like Vlora, Gjirokastra, Saranda, Permet, etc. Likewise, through bloody fighting the greater part of central Albania had been liberated, while in the north the enemy still held control of some towns and communication lines as routes for their withdrawal beyond our state borders.

In fact, the occupation authorities, the Quisling government and its administration had no real power: In all the liberated zones which in October of

that year comprised about 3/4 of the territory of Albania, the new people's state power had been established and was functioning with its organs from the base to the centre. Everything indicated that the enemy was no longer capable of making serious attempts to re-establish the former situation, the complete liberation of Albania was a matter of weeks.

In these circumstances the leadership of the party discussed the measures which had to be taken, especially in the political plane, in the face of these pending events, and taking into account the existing internal situation and the international relations of our new state, the Central Committee of the party considered it urgently necessary to transform the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee into the provisional democratic government of Albania.

As I have said above, and as is known from history, although the anti-fascist committee which was elected in Permet had all the attributes of a government (amongst ourselves this is what we called it), publically we did not call it a government, and this was for several reasons.

True, the Congress of Permet, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, founded the Albanian state, new in form and different in content from the feudal-bourgeois state of the Zog regime, true the supreme state organs which were elected at Permet had the wide support of the popular masses, and expressed and wielded state sovereignty, but it must not be forgotten that in May 1944 a good part of Albania was still under the occupation and control of Nazi troops and Quisling administrations. At the same time, in May 1944, we had not yet created a complete network of administrative organs through which the government could run and control the whole life of the country. Apart from this, had we proclaimed the formation of a nominal government in May 1944 this would have raised the question that this government should be recognized by our allies, which would not have been tactically opportune at those moments. This because the Anglo-American allies, especially, of the extent of whose "sympathy" for us we were well aware, would have refused us recognition, using as a pretext the circumstances which I mentioned above. Therefore, it was decided that the committee should be turned into a government at a second step, when the general offensive of our army had almost totally destroyed the German occupier, internal reaction, and together with them, the hopes of "allies" to oppose another political force to the National Liberation Movement, as a counterweight in the struggle for power.

In September 1944, the leadership of the party considered that the conditions for this new step had matured and raised the problem for discussion in the meeting of the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council. After pointing out to the comrades the reasons why at Permet we emerged with the anti-fascist committee and why now it had to be turned into and proclaimed the democratic government of the new Albania state, I concluded, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

"The proposal that the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee elected at Permet should be turned into the provisional democratic government of the new Albanian state is the logical continuation of the course on which the Communist Party has led the popular mass for the liberation of the country and the

seizure of political state power. In this sense, the meeting which will approve this proposal of the party will be a continuation of the congress of Permet, a 'session' of it which is held a few months later."

All the comrades of the Standing Committee of the council welcomed the proposal of the Central Committee of the CPA with enthusiasm and agreed that the 2d meeting of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council should be called in the first days of October. The precise date would be communicated to members of the ANLC later, together with the name of the city in which the meeting would be held, which was left to the general staff to decide depending on the military situation. Only a few days after this meeting we learned that the city of Berat had been liberated. We decided immediately that the 2d meeting of the ANLC should be held there, taking into account that it was one of the main cities of Albania, in the centre of the country and with ancient historical traditions.

During those days, the allied military missions of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States of America, headed respectively by Ivanov, Smith and Thomas Stevens, alias Thoma Stefani, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, also established themselves in Berat. Of course, Colonel Velmir Stojnic and the other Yugoslav "friends" were there, too. We invited all of them to take part in the meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council as representatives of friendly countries and allies in the common war against Nazi fascism. Of course, Ivanov and Stojnic accepted the invitation "with pleasure" and likewise the American from Korca, Stevens, who had also taken part in the congress of Permet as "an observer." Surprisingly, the British, too, unlike what they had done at Permet, agreed to attend the meeting to which they sent Major Smith who had replaced Palmer who had left in the first days of October. After the setback they had suffered in their attempts to speak to us through the language of force, the members of the British mission were now careful to mix a measure of "kindness" and "good behaviour" with intrigues and threats in their stands. Apparently they had finally realized that their plan with Abaz Kupa and others like him had no chance of success and now they were to try to work within the National Liberation Movement, within the front, through other Trojan horses, in order to sabotage the victory of the people's revolution.

The historic meeting of Berat began on 20 October, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, about 10 o'clock in the morning we members of the Standing Committee set off on foot for the hall in which the meeting was to be held and which is preserved to this day as a monument of history.

When we entered the hall, the members of the council and the guests rose to their feet in applause. Nearly half the hall, the boxes and the gallery were filled with people. We had fought together, everything was done in the name of the people. Therefore, as they say, we laid our cards on the table: the people themselves would see how a meeting of their representatives elected democratically at Permet was conducted.

Everything was simple, natural and moving, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses. Here there were no "deputies" with gold watch-chains, tailcoats and tasselled epaulettes, no berib-boned guards, no "protocol secretary" with the pile of dossiers, papers and ink-pots as in the parliament of the Zogite "fathers of

the nation." The deputies to this "parliament" were simple folk, sons of the people who came from the fronts of the war. They had neither inherited titles nor estates but had love for the people which they had proven in battles and were determined to work for the happy future of the homeland. This fact, alone, together with many others, showed that what was occurring in Albania was a radical change. The dawn of a new world, in which the scorned and oppressed of the past, through fighting, bloodshed and revolution, had won the right to decide the fate of the nation.

The chairman of the Standing Committee of the ANLC, Dr Omer Nishani, opened the meeting with a short speech in which he briefly summed up the internal and external situation and presented to the members of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council the purpose of the meeting.

"In this situation," he said, "When three quarters of Albania are under our jurisdiction, the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council considered it necessary to summon this meeting of the council to approve the transformation of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee into the democratic government of Albania. The Standing Committee considered it reasonable that this decision should be taken solemnly by the whole council, although on the basis of the competences with which it was charged at Permet, it could have carried out such an act itself."

The immediate applause of the members of the ANLC and the people present in the hall demonstrated in advance their approval of the proposal for this historic act which would be voted on at the end of the meeting. After Dr Nishani's opening address I was given the floor as chairman of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee to deliver the report in the name of this committee.

After a brief expose of the international situation, I presented a tableau of the successes which our people and our army led by the party had achieved in the decisive offensive to drive the Nazi beast from the sacred soil of the homeland.

"The decisions of the congress of Pemrmet are being successfully accomplished," I reported to the council, "our divisions and brigades smashed the second German offensive and marched triumphantly towards northern Albania and together with the defeats which they inflicted on the divisions of the Wehrmacht, they made the ceta of the Balli Kombetar and the bands of Shefget Verlaci and Abaz Kupi, Fiori Dine and Halil Alia, of Markagjoni and Muharrem Bajraktari, melt away like snow in the rain."

In my speech, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on, I spoke with passion and inspiration about the epic heroism of our National Liberation Army, about our brave partisans, commanders and commissars, who uniformed or in rags, fed or hungry, in the summer heat or freezing cold, on the plains, in the cities and on the mountain peaks, fought with self-sacrifice, defended the homeland, soaked every inch of this land in blood and fell with songs on their lips and made death "like birth." Where did this army find its strength and support, where was it armed, fed and sheltered? Among the people.

"Our army," I pointed out in this part of the report, "has been armed in the war with the weapons it seized from the enemy in battle, has been fed with the bread of the people who shared their children's crust with the partisans. The homes of the people, the mountains and forests of the homeland have been and are the barracks of our army. But," I said, turning to the allied military representatives, "for the common interests of this sacred war. In order to arm the thousands of volunteers who are increasing the ranks of our army every day and in order to block the roads for the withdrawal of the German forces and to wipe them out, we ask our allies for weapons, weapons, weapons. No one can refuse us the right to fight. No one can break our will to fight and to win, but, we repeat, we demand weapons and ammunition."

Who knows how many times I had addressed this request to our "friends," who can remember in how many meetings, talks official letters and radiograms we had told them we were not asking for sweets and chocolates or anything else apart from weapons, cartridges and shells. We repeated these demands and received promises, hypocritical diplomatic smiles, excuses and offers to sell out the homeland. We appealed to them for the sincere aid of the allies, but our appeals were like a voice in the desert. There was nothing we could do about it, this has been the fate of our people, rarely have we had loyal friends and sincere allies. But what of it, perhaps precisely this has made the people more vital, more indomitable and has convinced them that they can expect freedom and happiness only by relying on their own forces.

In the report I dwelt particularly on the political effects which the formation of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee at the congress of Permet had had, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues. Here I stressed the enthusiasm with which this event had been greeted by the Albanian people who, in thousands of letters, had expressed their joy over the formation of the first people's government and also expressed their will to support and assist it in its activity for the good of Albania.

Quite the opposite was the response of the reactionary circles and forces, for whom the formation of the anti-fascist committee was a bombshell which completely destroyed their fantastic dreams. "The formation of the committee with the attributes of a revolutionary government," I stressed particularly and not without purpose, "made ridiculous the attempts of reaction inside and outside Albania to create puppet governments without any sympathy or support among the people. Whoever engages in the production of such creation doomed to failure is playing the game of the enemies of the Albanian people."

I went on to report about the work and activity which the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee had carried out during this 4-month period. In this part of my speech I presented to the council a summary of the efforts of the committee for the reorganization of the life in the liberated districts, in the cities and villages, about the measures which had been taken to get the economy functioning, to ensure food and shelter for the population, to ensure the health service, the opening of schools, the development of culture and propaganda.

Both with their prolonged burst of applause while I was reading the report and in their discussion of it later, the members of the council made a positive assessment and approved the activity of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee.

After explaining to the comrade the manner of the organization and functioning of our new state, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, I went on to the main object of the 2d meeting of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council, the proposal that the anti-fascist committee should be turned into the provisional people's democratic government.

"The democratic government which will emerge from this meeting," I said, "will remain faithful to the political and military platform of the National Liberation Movement and the decisions of the congress of Permet. In the first place, it will continue the task for the complete liberation of the homeland and carry it through to the end. After the complete liberation of Albania," I continued, "and after the situation has been stabilized, the democratic government will ensure and organize free democratic elections for the constituent assembly, which will decide the form of the state and approve the constitution of the Albanian state.

"The government will seek recognition from the allies of the great anti-fascist bloc as the only government of the Albanian people, emerged from the war and from the ranks of the people, which represents and expresses the will of the whole Albanian people. The allies will recognize our government," I pointed out, "because with their own eyes they have seen the sacrifices we have made in this terrible and unequal war, have seen the daily heroism of our small but indomitable people, who in very difficult conditions, hurled themselves upon the enemy with untold self-sacrifice."

After the report which I delivered on behalf of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee, which took about an hour, we took a break.

After this break, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues further on, the session recommenced with the greetings of representatives of allied countries, who, speaking in general terms, praised our successes in the National Liberation War and expressed sympathy and support for our people. Of course, the greetings of each of them had their own nuances, depending on their aims and the stands which they maintained towards us, even if only in appearance.

For example, Smith, despite the criticism aimed at him for the insufficient, not to say, non-existent aid, did not mention that matter at all, but simply promised that "the allies will not forget their wartime friends in times of peace," as if to warn us that after the war, too, we would have plenty of problems with them. The American of Albanian origin, but totally degenerated, in broken Albanian, expressed his pleasure, "as an American soldier and an Albanian from his family origin."

The haughty Velmir Stojnic spoke longer than the others, and in his speech in the Serbian language the frequent repetition of the words Tito, Yugoslavia, the Balkans, etc, was very noticeable. When his speech was translated, it was

realized that the Yugoslav colonel had spoken mostly about the war of Yugoslavia and Tito rather than welcome this historic event to which we had invited him, Stojnic spoke about "the unity of the Balkan peoples" and also mentioned the famous "federation," promised "the aid and support of sister Yugoslavia," but did not say one word about the fight of our forces in aid of the National Liberation Movement in Kosova and Dibra as a concrete expression of the militant fraternization of our peoples and countries in the battles against the common enemy.

The greeting of Major Ivanov was welcomed with enthusiasm by the delegates. When he took the floor as well as at the end of his speech, the hall echoed with cheers for great Stalin and the Red Army, and in the midst of Ivanov's short address, one of the comrades in the hall shouted in the Russian language, "da zdrastvuyet soyyetskiy soyuz." Of course, this was an expression of the great love which we Albanian communists had for the Bolshevik Party, for Lenin and Stalin, for the first socialist country in the world, and with this love our party had educated the whole people, who saw in the Soviet Union not only the colossal force which crushed the fascist beast, but also the great supporter of the peoples of the world in the war for freedom and social justice.

Compared with the sincere and enthusiastic welcome it received from those present, Ivanov's speech was extremely dry. Indeed, in the assessment which we made of the war of our people, who by "fighting behind the enemy's lines, had given them great assistance," there were some songs of megalomania. I have written about my impression of this envoy of the Soviet command. We had welcomed his coming with joy and considered it a great aid. However, we had no benefit from Ivanov, he gave us no precise information and when we asked him about something or sought his opinion, his only reply was: "I shall inform Moscow by radio," because he had a radio transmitter with him. Ivanov knew we needed weapons and military supplies, but his radio never worked to transmit our needs to the Soviet command and nothing came to us from there.

The tone of the contributions of our comrades participating in the meeting, who, in their fiery speeches, rejoiced at our freedom, expressed the will and aspirations of the people and their confidence in and optimism about the brilliant future, was entirely different, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. The comrades who spoke unanimously approved the proposal for the transformation of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee into a provisional government.

The discussion continued on the following day, 22 October Comrade Enver Hoxha writes it was a Sunday and such beautiful fine weather that it was hard to believe it was the end of October. When we were going to the cinema where the meeting was held we were constantly surrounded by the people who were in especially large numbers at the entrance of the building. That day the vote was to be taken on the question of transforming the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee into the provisional democratic government. As I said, however, the voting would be only a formal juridical act, not only those who took part in the discussion, but also the others in the hall, through their enthusiasm which now grew in crescendo, had already expressed their approval. That day the atmosphere in the hall seemed to have reached its climax. The cheers and ovations which accompanied the words of the comrades who mounted

the podium were such that the comrade who was keeping the minutes of the meeting had thrown-up his arms in despair, powerless to catch the words which were said to record them in the minutes. Later, when the other comrades and I checked over the documents of the meeting, we laughed loudly when in the part of the minutes there were only the names of the 'speakers' and the note, "because of the great enthusiasm in the hall it is impossible to keep notes."

In this situation, after five or six comrades had spoken, and after the ceaseless shouts of the members of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council and the people, "democratic government," and "put it to the vote," Dr Omer Nishani declared the discussion closed and, after establishing a moment's silence, said:

"Let us vote on the proposal that the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee should be turned into the provisional democratic government of Albania, all in favour raise their fists."

Every one stood up with their clenched fists raised high.

After this historic decision, Dr Omer Nishani announced that the Standing Committee of the ANLC had charged me with the task of head of the democratic government. In the afternoon session I was to present to the council the program and composition of the government.

In afternoon session, on behalf of the government, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, I made a programmatic declaration which expressed the commitment of the new government to carry the war for the liberation of the country through to the end, to remain loyal to the historic decisions of Permet, to strengthen the people's state power, to defend and guarantee the democratic rights for the popular masses, etc. At the same time, in the declaration I also announced the request to the allies for recognition of the provisional democratic government as the only lawful government of the Albanian people. The composition of the government was identical with that of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee.

Thus, on 23 October, the 2d meeting of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council came to an end, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. The historic decision which it took for the transformation of the anti-fascist National Liberation Committee into a democratic government was an indispensable historic step, a logical consequence of the war and the popular revolution under the leadership of the party. With this decision, the taking of political power by the working masses who had overthrown the old state power through war became a reality de facto and de jure. The importance of this historic decision was to be reflected later, too, in the deepening of the revolution, in the further steps which the party took at different stages and at the proper time.

After the closing of the meeting, we walked from the hall to the premises where the government had been established amongst the cheering people. A large crowd had gathered in front of the building where we had established ourselves. The chiefs of the allied missions, who had come for "a courtesy visit" to congratulate us, were astonished at what they saw and, of course,

this did not please some of them. We parted from the masses of people who had surrounded us, but even when we went inside there was no end to the powerful cheering:

Long live free Albania, long live the democratic government, long live the Communist Party, long live the heroic National Liberation Army.

Omer Nishani was deeply moved and put his hand on my shoulder:

"Enver, you must appear before them, don't you hear them?" he said and he took out his handkerchief and wiped his tears of emotion from his spectacles.

I went to the window and thanked them with words which came from my heart. I don't remember precisely what I said, we had no microphones or loudspeakers, but the people understood what I was saying, passed it on from one to the other and cheered. They had confidence in their own sons, tested in the common war. On the insistence of the people, after me the other comrades also appeared at the window.

And now work, work and struggle at the head of the party and the people, leading the great battles which awaited us.

Well, courage and a great deal of work were needed to cope with such urgent questions as the procurement of grain, the repair of roads and bridges, the opening of schools and courses against illiteracy. And all this at a time when the country was still at war, when in the liberated districts and cities the ashes left behind by the enemy's barbarity were still hot.

We stayed in Berat about a month, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, and the lights in the building which the government had occupied, could be seen burning late and, not rarely, right through till morning. The comrades who were ministers were obliged to involve themselves not only in the main questions, but also in minor matters, down to technical details, because our "apparatus" was absolutely minimal and a whole ministry occupied only one or two rooms in the government building. Somebody came to me and raised the problem of cadres, of deputy-ministers, but I cut him short saying:

"later we shall have everything just as it should be. Now we ourselves are ministers, directors, and clerks, all in one."

"We waged the war with the people," I said Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, "the people who have nothing to eat themselves are keeping us, too, and we'll do these jobs together with the people. Where is the government going to find what you want? We are striving for one cause. Therefore we cannot separate the problems of our government from those of the people, both today and in the future we shall turn to the people and no one else for everything. No manna is going to fall to us from heaven."

We had such talks, meetings and working contacts everyday, indeed, several times a day, both these neither wearied nor bored us. The work of the party and the state, the leadership of our National Liberation Army in the final

battles, were a burden which the party and the people had charged us to carry and we would carry them on our backs indefeatigably, especially now that we were on the eve of the great victory.

--Pressures and accusations of the sectarianism by the allies. Denunciation of their plans.

During those days in Berat, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on, however, the grave situation which has created by the anti-Marxist and anti-Albanian interference of Tito's envoy, Velmir Stojnic, and especially by the trap and plot which he was preparing, together with Koci Xoxe, Sejfulla, Pandi Kristo and others against the Communist Party of Albania and the future of our homeland, were causing us deep distress. As to what were the aims of this hostile plot, this we were to realize later, but as I have written in detail in the book the Titoites, as early as those days I was convinced that the line of our party was being unjustly attacked by Tito's envoy.

In recalling those moments, I remember quite well what great efforts I imposed on myself to avoid communicating my concern and worry to other comrades. On the one hand, I had to fight to defend the purity of the line of the party against the hostile work of the Yugoslav representative and the clique which he was forming, and on the other hand I had to overcome all my worries and welcome the comrades of the council and the government with a smile when they came to talk over various problems and to discuss the measures and decisions we would take immediately after we entered Tirana.

With sadness in my heart, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, but a smile on my face, I also welcomed the delegates of the city of Berat who came to me to convey their congratulations to the valiant party which liberated the people. They were not aware of my desperation, did not know that a group of Trotskyites was throwing mud at this party which the people loved so much.

During those days in Berat we were also preparing for two other important events, the conference of the National Liberation Front and the congress of anti-fascist women. The conference of the front which was held. If I am not mistaken, 3 or 4 days after the 2d meeting of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council, was to discuss and approve the decision that from now on the National Liberation Front should be a great political organization of all the honest people who fought for a free, democratic people's Albania, leaving the functions of state power to the national liberation councils. As we had agreed in the leadership of the party, the organization of the front would create its own cells everywhere, the councils of the front, which would play a colossal role for the unification of the people, for the mobilization of all their creative energies and abilities in the service of the cause of the construction of the new Albania.

Precisely when we were preparing for this conference as well as during its proceedings, Velmir Stojnic and Njiaz Dizdarevic, in unity and collaboration with Koci Xoxe, Sejfulla Maleshova, Nako Spiru and others, tried to attack and distort the line of the party in connection with the National Liberation Front. The accusations about "sectarianism" which they had put on the agenda,

were reflected in their "suggestions" and "recommendations" to extend the "bounds of the front." Putting it bluntly, this would have meant that elements who, during the years of the war, had not fought or had even attacked us with arms, should be admitted in the National Liberation Front. Neither Tito's delegates nor their Albanian acolytes were short of "arguments" in favour of this. This was a stage on the way to realizing the plan worked out in Belgrade to attack the Communist Party of Albania, to show that during the years of its existence it had allegedly proved incapable of working out and following a correct political line and thus, the terrain would be prepared for Tito and his men to take over the reins of Albania.

Koci, Sejfulla and the others came to me one after the other as though by chance, and repeated the tale which I had first heard from Stojnic.

"The front, as a broad organization of the masses, should not have, and there is no reason for it to have, strictly defined limits," Sejfulla said to me on one occasion. "After liberation, we, who have our state power, ought to have all the forces with us in the front and not against us, otherwise there will be the risk of civil war."

"I don't understand, what are you referring to concretely?" I asked him, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

"The mistakes which have been made previously, which were justified for the circumstances of that time, we have the opportunity to repair today," he said. "Thus, wisely and gently, we shall prevent possible opponents from taking the initiative. And what can they do to us within the front? Practically nothing. They have no strength, have no base, and we'll tie their hands politically."

"This would be the greatest favour which we could do them." I interrupted, "let us not forget that the front is the political organization of the people, of patriots who have fought for liberation and the people's state power, while you propose we should allow into it traitors and criminals who will fight us from within tomorrow and even provide the conditions for them to penetrate into our organs of power right up to the government. This we must never allow. This we did not do even in the most difficult times and we acted correctly and not wrongly, let alone now when the war itself has defined who remained to the end in the ranks of the enemy."

This was the beginning of that campaign which was to reach its culmination at the 2d plenum of the Central Committee of the party in Berat, with the accusations of Koci, Sejfulla, Nako Spiru, Naxhiqe Dume and others, orchestrated by the Titoties, that allegedly "we had not kept close to the people," the doors had been closed and the front had become narrow," etc.

The subsequent hostile activity of the "patriots" of this ilk once again clearly demonstrated the correctness of our view and the aims of those who managed to impose themselves on us temporarily. It is interesting that the pressures of the Yugoslav envoys for "the extension of the front" were in complete conformity, both as a general idea and down to the specific individuals, with those of the British, who demanded our "reconciliation" with Abaz Kupa and other chiefs of reaction.

--This was the only government of the Albanian people which had emerged from the people represents them and express their will.

Meanwhile, the enemy had not been finally driven out. Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on. From Berat I signed the order to the 1st army corps, divisions and brigades to attack and liberate Tirana, the operational plan for the liberation of the capital, which had been worked out, was a component part of the strategic plan which was to make possible that by the end of November no foreign enemy would be left in the whole of Albania. We had all the possibilities to achieve this objective. Now the National Liberation Army was comprised of over 70,000 fighters organized in brigades, divisions and army corps.

I discussed the final details for the liberation of Tirana with Hysni Kapo, who was the delegate of the Central Committee and commissar of the 1st army corps and was the cadre with the main responsibility for carrying out this plan.

And so, on the evening of 16 November, the news reached us in Berat that Tirana, the capital of our homeland, was virtually liberated. Only a few hours of life were left to the occupiers and traitors. With incontainable joy and special emotions I sat down that very evening and wrote the message addressed to the Albanian people about this great good news, while on the following day, the morning of 17 November, the final rifle shots were heard and the capital of our homeland was liberated once and for all.

Now the road for Tirana was opened. After so many years of battles and skirmishes, toil and sacrifices at the head of the party and the war for freedom, the moment had come for us, the sons and daughters of the people, to enter the capital in triumph.

I proposed that the government should enter Tirana on 28 November, the outstanding day of the proclamation of independence. The very choice of this day for the establishment of the democratic government in the capital liberated by the partisan rifles, would be significant.

We were returning to our beloved Tirana and for the first time after so many years, we entered there not illegally, with false names and documents, but freely and, moreover, triumphant, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes. After a glorious and heroic war, Tirana, which for years on end had gone to bed and awakened amongst whistle blasts and alarm sirens and the curfew, was now liberated. Our eagle-eyed Marxist-Leninist party which was never wrong in its line, because it had the desires and aspirations of the people in his heart, led this war. It undertook the heaviest, but sacred burden and bore it with honour, this time leading our people to complete victory because along with freedom, it brought the people to power.

As we approached the capital, I felt excited and I remembered the days which I had passed there when, together with beloved and close comrades, with Qemal, Vasil and others, we worked to form our Communist Party, the steel vanguard of the people, from the separate groups that were quarrelling with one another. I remembered our first demonstrations and actions, the days and nights when we passed illegally from one base to another, protected by the love of the simple

people. Here in Tirana we had grown up, had been tempered, had gained experience to organize and lead and to carry out the tasks which our beloved party had entrusted to us.

From the palace of brigades along the Elbasan Street to the centre, the aftermath of the heroic war was very obvious. The shells and bullets had left holes in the streets and on the walls of ruined houses and other buildings, while the Minaret next to the clock tower in the centre had been cut in half by artillery fire.

Nevertheless we found the people of Tirana enthusiastic and optimistic, welcoming their government with songs. A great crowd had filled the streets and the big boulevard in front of Hotel Dajti.

From a simple tribune I greeted the people on the occasion of independence day which, for the first time after so many years of war, we were celebrating in freedom.

Speaking with great emotion, I said: "Today our glorious flag, red with the blood of heroes of the people who have fallen in this anti-fascist war, is waving proudly in the sky of free Albania. Five years have gone by under the heavy burden of fascist slavery, five times on each 28 November the blood of the heroic sons of the people who clashed with the armed forces of the occupiers and traitors, has flowed in the streets of the cities of Albania. Thus, the national day has become doubly sacred, as the day of independence and the day of the unity of the Albanian people."

Frequently interrupted by bursts of cheering and applause, I spoke about the heroic fight of our people, who responded immediately to the call of their finest sons and, under the leadership of the party, succeeded in liberating the homeland once and for all and taking the reins of the future into their own hands.

The construction of Albania, the development of the people's economy, culture and schooling, the raising of their standard of living, open a new page in our history, a history which it is in our hands to make and we shall make it just as glorious as the National Liberation War. I said, "We shall emerge triumphant from this struggle, too, because now we have our own state power which belongs to the people and works for the people. Therefore, let us give our all for this state power, let us make it strong, because in this way we shall rebuild our devastated country, revive our agriculture and economy, rebuild the ruined houses, open schools and build hospitals. Albania will become a great work site. In the war for liberation we did not spare our lives and today we must not spare our toil and sweat. Young and old understand that they are no longer toiling for foreigners but working and building our own country, our own lives."

They were historic moments, moving and unforgettable for the party and our people, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on they were the moments of rejoicing at the great victory. With blood and sweat, with toil and sacrifice, we had accomplished a gigantic and majestic work.

On the morrow of that unforgettable day we received the news of the liberation of Shkodra, which marked the liberation of the news of the liberation of Shkodra, which marked the liberation of the whole of Albania.

Precisely on that day, two divisions of the National Liberation Partisan Army, of that heroic army of the Albanian people which, with its blood, heroism and self-sacrifice, had scored victory after victory over the foreign occupiers and their collaborators, on the orders of the general command crossed the border to assist in the liberation of the peoples of Yugoslavia. New victories were to be recorded in the glorious history of our people's army, while the finest sons of our country were to shed their blood for the liberation of our brothers in Kosova, Montenegro and Macedonia and the peoples of Yugoslavia, in Albania 29 November marked the beginning of a new epoch, the epoch of socialism.

Thus, alongside the historic day of 28 November, the great day of the flag, another great day, 29 November, was marked, the day of the liberation of the homeland and the triumph of the people's revolution. These two dates represent two different, but glorious periods of the Albanian people, two periods which will continue to shine in all their majesty as the years and centuries go by.

And now a new period was beginning. All of us were confident: Just as we had accomplished a magnificent deed during the war, we would go on to build and defend the other deed we had before us, socialist Albania, even more majestically and marvellously.

The new epoch commenced, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on. Now our party, the new Albanian state, with its organs born in the heat of the war, together with the people and at the head of the people, with multiplied forces, had to build the new Albania from its foundations. We had to prove and confirm to our people, to friends and enemies, to everybody, that we were capable, not only of taking power, but also of safeguarding and strengthening the new people's state power and making it effective and vital. We had to make Albania a country of free and happy people, an impregnable fortress against any enemy. And for this, mere good wishes, appeals or declarations were insufficient. These lofty aims would be achieved and confirmed, above all, through our work, through concrete deeds in all fields and in all directions. There was no time to lose, we had to savour the great joy of the historic victory of liberation only in work, in the many, great, heavy tasks which it was essential to carry out.

The first days, months and years when we laid the foundations of the new life will never be forgotten. We had political power in our hands. Had the lofty ideals of the party in our minds and hearts, had the great enthusiasm and confidence of the victory achieved and had the determination and readiness to do everything necessary for the benefit of this country and this people. Undoubtedly, all these things were a powerful base, a great source of energy and inspiration which impelled us and made us confident that, with work and all-round efforts, we would achieve everything that we lacked.

The fact is, however, that we lacked many things, much more than anyone who has not known Albania immediately after the end of the war, could imagine today.

Added to the poverty and backwardness of the past, the truly miserable state in which the regimes of the past had left the economy, culture, education and the people, were the colossal destructions of the past 5 years of war. We had to think about and secure as quickly as possible shelter for tens of thousands of inhabitants of devastated towns and villages, food for the people who were suffering hunger, as well as clothing and footwear, schools, workshops, and so on. We lacked the funds, we lacked the means, we lacked the specialists, even with a minimal level of qualification. There could be no movement from one district to the other because even that feeble communications network which had been built previously had been blown up and completely paralysed by the war. Winter had begun and it would make the situation even more difficult. Meanwhile, though the whole country had been liberated, the last remnants of the old world, the criminals and mercenary bandits who had not managed to leave with the occupying forces, were lurking in the gorges, the forests and caves, and now, with the fury of wounded beasts, were seeking salvation in acts of terror and violence against the people, communists and councillors. Supporting them through visible and invisible links were the classes overthrown by the state power, and, of course, the foreign imperialist and chauvinist powers which could never accept the radical change which had occurred and was being made more complete in Albania.

All these Comrade Enver Hoxha writes (and I have mentioned very little of the shortages, the all-round difficulties and our enemies of those moments) confronted us and had to overcome at all costs. Since we had triumphed over the occupiers and traitors and seized power through so much bloodshed and sacrifice, without fail we had to lead Albania forward for the benefit and happiness of the people, despite the anger and fury of enemies.

Many had tried and would continue to try in all kinds of ways, with various disguises, pretensions and theories. To replace our party at the helm, but the fact is that we did not allow them to do so and did not fall into this tragic error. Especially in the first moments after liberation, both the camouflaged counter-revolutionary elements within the country and the external forces, including the Yugoslav "friends," in particular, exerted great pressure on us to persuade us that now we had triumphed we should not "proclaim" the party openly, should neglect the party and operate "within the front." Hidden in the front, according to "the platform of the front." Why? Because, they told us, if the Communist Party is proclaimed as a party in power, the "democratic facade" of the front and the order will be damaged, the great democratic allies, Britain and America, will be angered, and will not recognize the government, those who are "unclear" will be frightened off, etc, etc.

Although there were some who fell into these waters without evil intent, because that was how it seemed to them and what they had been accustomed to in the past, in general the bearers and inciters of such opportunist and capitulationist rumours and "advice" proceeded from deliberate aims of political diversion. They were not in the least concerned either about "democracy" or

about "recognition of the government": Their real concern was to displace the party from the leading role in the life of the country, to turn it into an appendage of the front and gradually divert the whole course of the revolution, so that everything we had gained would slip from our hands and the people would again be placed in the shackles of the old slavery and old treaties.

This was precisely the aim, not only of such self-proclaimed bourgeois-democratic elements, as the Shefqet Bejas, Riza Danis and Gjergj Kokoshis, but also of Sejfulla Maleshova and company, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses.

I can never forget that moment when one of them, Gjergj Kokoshi, with the "sincerity" of an innocent, committed one of the vilest and most irritating provocations against me. Kokoshi did not display open vacillations during the war, was elected to the highest instances of the front, and when we formed the anti-fascist committee and later the provisional government, we appointed him minister of education, which was a suitable post for him, because he was a man with knowledge of education and some culture. We had respect for him and, in appearance at least, he did not show any hostility towards our party. And now, in the name of the "front" and "our recognition in the world," as a "friend outside the party," he too, joined in the enemy plans to get rid of the Communist Party of Albania.

He based his "argument" on the claim that the government of the USA and Britain would recognize our government if we "withdrew" the party from the limelight, if "even just as a tactic" we hid its name and role.

"We will never do this," I cut short Gjergj Kokoshi's "refrain," "because such an act would mean abandoning all we have won of our own free will in order to please the British. This would be betrayal not only of the people but also of ourselves."

"But we are really in power," Gjergj Kokoshi said. "See, I am not a communist but I am minister. Mr Omer is not a communist, but he is president. True, you're a communist and general secretary of the Communist Party, but above all, the country and the world is recognizing you and ought to recognize you as prime minister. It is the state function that is prized and honoured in the international arena...."

"And so, what?" I asked him with an anger I could hardly contain, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

"I am coming to the point from which I started, or rather which you, too, are worried about," continued the other fixing his eyes on me. "What would you lose from your power and authority, from your power as head of government, if you were not secretary of the party, too? Nothing, I think. And the same thing is true of the fate of the country. Since we have a democratic government in power, since the front exists as a broad political organization, what harm would be done if your Communist Party were not proclaimed? None at all. We hold power and will yield it to no one. With...."

I jumped to my feet, cutting short his words: "I thought better of you, Gjergj Kokoshi" I said, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, "from the craziness of your bourgeois intellectualism, or I don't know from what other position. You are not only throwing mud at our beloved party, but also committing a grave provocation against me personally. Do you think that I and my comrades became communists and led the people in the war just to become prime ministers, or ministers and, now that we have taken 'power', we should abandon the party, its cause and its victories. This will never, never occur. We did not fight to become lords over the people, we did not fight for a change of cabinets and soft seats, but we fought and will fight to the end to completely overthrow the old era. It is not you or I in power, but the people. The state we set up is not mine or yours, but the people's. The people achieved these victories through their struggle on the course our Communist Party showed them. And don't forget that you yourself became a minister, irrespective that you are not a communist, because during the war you agreed with, supported and applied that line and followed that course which the Communist Party showed us and on which it led us. However, the difference and the gap between us is apparently much greater and deeper than what we had thought or envisaged. You have fought for a soft seat, while we have fought and are fighting for Albania. This is the mildest reply that I could give you at these moments. As for your 'concern' about the role of our party, let me declare to you clearly and unequivocally: We shall never allow ourselves to weaken its role, nor allow anyone, whoever he may be, to damage or infringe it."

Gjergj Kokoshi, went away like a wet hen and when he subsequently went even further on his course, which was the opposite of that on which the party led the people, he lost both his soft seat and the remainder of his feathers. Below I shall speak about him and other "democrats" like him who, by change or for subversive aims, had united with us during those years, but here I want to underline that never at any time were we held up or confused by their efforts and insinuations.

It was a different matter, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, however, especially for a time, with the Yugoslav "friends" and the agents whom they had managed to recruit within our ranks, who, regrettably, included some of the main cadres of the party.

Always voicing the same "worries," using the same "arguments" and "advice" as the bourgeois democrats, Tito's men, too, did everything possible to make us keep the party in a state of illegality or, at the most, semi-illegality, to hide it in the front, and merge it with the front.

Their ceaseless efforts and pressures, especially their attempts to isolate me from the party, achieved a certain degree of success. For a time an unacceptable situation verging on absurdity was created amongst us: Although our party was effectively the leading and guiding force. For "the sake of opinion" and external appearances, efforts were made to hide its name and to cover up its true role.

While there is no need to go into those details which are now well-known, I want to say only that, although the pressures of the Titoites truly had a

certain effect, in reality our party never wavered from the role which it had won through the strength of its ideas and the blood and work of its members. Whether or not we always advertised the word and the role of the party everywhere, and here there was some concession which we ourselves considered absurd, nevertheless, in reality, it was the party, from the base to the centre, which led and acted in the whole life of the country. In the state, in the front, in defence, in the economy and everywhere.

[20 Nov 84]

[Text] Part VII

Under the leadership of the party the people liberated the homeland from the foreign yoke and themselves from all class oppression and exploitation.

--The measures and the reforms of the dictatorship of the Proletariat in Albania had a profound class character, dealing heavy blows to the bourgeoisie.

Tirana, 20 November (ATA)--In continuation of his book with memoirs and historical notes laying the foundations of new Albania, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes about the continuous strengthening of the political and economic power in Albania after the liberation of the country. He speaks about the great enthusiasm of the popular masses for the construction of the new life, about the efforts of the bourgeoisie to hinder this non stop march as well as about the activity of the Anglo-Americans to undermine the victories achieved by the Albanian people.

--The seizure of the economic power alongside the political one, an important measure taken by the party after the country's liberation.

Both during the war and in the new period of the work of construction, the party and the new democratic government turned to the people relied on the people, while winning over and mobilizing the people Comrade Enver Hoxha writes further on.

We can never forget the unprecedented mobilization, the indescribable enthusiasm of our marvellous people in the battles to heal the wounds of the war. Hungry and ill-clad, aware that in their homes or in the temporary shelter that had been provided for them they even lacked bread and beans for their children, nevertheless men and women, children and old folk, and especially our heroic youth, worked voluntarily, day and night, to build the new life from the ruins. Albania was turned into a kind of building site where, true, manual labour alone prevailed, but people worked with a will and desire because they saw they were working for themselves. This, of course, had a great effect to strengthen their unity and to enhance the love of the people for the party and our lawful government.

The new state was establishing its authority first of all in the economic field, by exercising control over all the enterprises and companies of Albanian merchants and industrialists, by requisitioning food and pharmaceutical products,

means of transport, the buildings necessary for the state administration or for housing, etc and in some cases with compensation, in other cases without compensation. Likewise, all the assets of war criminals and political fugitives and the assets of Germany and Italy and of their citizens were confiscated. Gradually the nationalization of all the existing industry in our country began: The mines, the factories and the shops were nationalized or confiscated, became state property and were the first basis of the socialist common property.

Thus, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, by making wise and consistent use of the political power which we had created and won through the war, the party orientated and led us on the right course to win economic power, to place the economy in the service of the people and in the hands of the people. Thus, automatically, the political power was strengthened, the confidence of the masses in its leading organs was strengthened and steeled, and the people felt and saw that everything was being done in their favour and in the name of their state power.

The sharp sword of the dictatorship of the Proletariat was cutting deep into the bourgeoisie. The first measures and reforms were not only of an economic character, it was their political class essence which was their sharpest edge. This was the case with the imposition of special taxes on war profits. That was a measure with pronounced class tendentiousness, because it was a mortal blow to the mercantile bourgeoisie who, during the war, as always, had fattened themselves on the blood and the suffering of the people.

The party and the front had given them their chance by making continual appeals to them to unite with, take part in or assist the war of the people, but the merchants, the bourgeois and the feudal lords not only did not listen to these appeals, but disdained them and opposed the peoples war with the most unscrupulous ways and means. Now that the people were in power and exercising their own dictatorship, these measures did not express the injustice of a state (at no moment of the development of society can the people be unjust), but they must sublime justice to which society could aspire. Through these measures, any chance of returning to the past was destroyed once and for all and the foundations were laid for a new society, the socialist society.

In order to impose the peoples justice and retribution upon those who had stained their hands with the blood of the finest sons of the country, those who had put villages to the torch and had served as collaborators with the occupiers, selling out everything and, above all, the homeland, in March 1945 a special court was opened. A large number of criminals and traitors appeared before it, including members of the Quisling governments, chiefs of the Balli Kombetar and agents of fascism, such as Fejzi Alizoti, Tefik Mborja, Shuk Gurakuqi, Bahri Omari, Kole Tromara, Hilme Leka, Ibrahim Bicaku and others.

Meanwhile, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, in the name of the democratic government of Albania, I sent a letter of President Truman in which I expressed the indignation of our people over the gentle treatment which the Albanian criminals, who had fled at the end of the war, were receiving from the Anglo-American authorities in Italy. This was a lawful demand and the failure to respond to

it was another injustice committed against the Albanian people who insisted that instead of being treated gently and left at large to carry out their fascist intrigues against our people, Ali Kelcyra, Mithat Frasheri, Abaz Kupi, Kadri Cakrani, Koco Muka and Vehip Runa should be in the dock along with the other traitors and criminals, and there receive the sentences they deserved. It was not difficult to understand what the Anglo-Americans were aiming at in their preferential treatment of criminals and traitors to the Albanian people. It would not be long before they would be used as cannon fodder or else they would be trying to eat one another like a basket of crabs.

The court sentenced some of the traitors to capital punishment. This was a sentence they deserved, which expressed the will of the people who followed the development of this trial with great interest. During the days when the court was in session the people who followed the proceedings, both inside and outside the cinema building in which the trial was held, pronounced sentence in no uncertain terms, by shouting:

Long live the peoples justice--death to the war criminals.

And so, one after the other, the brambles and thorns of the past, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, the leeches who had sucked the blood of the people, the snakes who had venom on the tip of their tongues, began to be cleared away.

--The popular masses were having an ever greater trust in the party leadership.

All these things strengthened the position enhanced the authority of the party and the new state, the masses of the people were becoming more and more convinced that the road on which the party led them was their most secure future, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues.

The warm welcome which the people gave the first laws and measures of the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist council (from the liberation of the country until 11 January 1946, when the constituent assembly met, this Standing Committee was the supreme legislative organ), was the greatest endorsement which could have been given to the correctness of the line which the party and the peoples state power were pursuing. The reform of a democratic character which were undertaken at this period strengthened the economic basis of the state, strengthened the trust of the masses of the people in it, because now all were seeing that the new state was the irreconcilable enemy of the bourgeoisie, feudal lords and speculators, and that the democratic government was capable of running and organizing the life of the country. Life was difficult for the people, but they were seeing with their own eyes that the party and the organs of the state were doing the impossible to create conditions so that life could proceed normally and the wounds of the war and the past would be healed as quickly as possible.

One of the great and profound revolutions which we set about from the outset and carried through to the end through consistent efforts was the carrying out of the land reform, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses. With this revolution in the life of the Albanian countryside we not only fulfilled one of the age-old aspirations of and the first promises which we had made during the war of the loyal ally of the working classes, the brave and patriotic Albanian peasantry,

but we also brought about a colossal transformation in the relations of production and opened the way to the birth of socialist relations in the countryside, which the party had envisaged in its long-term plan.

We decided Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, that the application of the reform should start with a symbolic act, therefore, together with my comrades, Dr Nishani, Myslim Peza, Spiro Moisiu, Shefqet Peci, Gaqo Tashko, who had become minister of agriculture, and other comrades, we went to Lushnja where we witnessed the indescribable joy of the peasant of Myzeqe who wept while he held the land deed tight in his trembling hands. One could not but be moved by the most unexpected scenes of the expression of joy and love for the party, the front and the new state. I remember that amongst this truly popular enthusiasm and rejoicing I spoke with a voice that was trembling with emotion:

Comrade peasants, you must always keep your eyes open and have your fists ready to strike hard at the enemies of the people. The distribution of the land has begun, the deeds are being handed out, more and more each day you will have the assistance of your government. We will put all our possibilities in the service of the people. We do not promise you the heavens, but you can be sure that what we say we do. I offer you my heart-felt congratulations on the land which you have received. I wish you a long life to make our fields flourish generation after generation.

The economic effects of this reform, and especially its political effects on the outlook of the people, were truly among the greatest. The people swore by the party and the state, which gave them the land, which was equal to swearing by my head. By giving the peasantry the land which belonged to it in perpetuity, the party and the state linked themselves even more closely with the peasantry.

Consistently, step after step, battling with difficulties and all kinds of enemies, the people, led by the party, were taking economic power into their own hands and, in this way, becoming masters of their own fate in the broadest sense of the term.

The main thing that rejoiced us Comrade Enver Hoxha writes and filled us with strength was the fact that the people approved, supported and enthusiastically applied the policy and line which our party and the new state were following. In the course of the application of this line we saw and were convinced that the unity of the party with the people, which we had created in the fire of the war, was becoming ever stronger. And now, after so many victories and achievements, the moment had come and the conditions had been created to carry out one of the fundamental commitments and tasks which we had set ourselves at the outset: The moment had come for the people to solemnly and freely express their will on the form of the regime which they wished to establish in Albania.

--Albania, peoples republic.

The people first raised the demand to express themselves on the form of the regime in August 1945, at the 1st congress of the National Liberation Front, which, from that time onwards, took the name of the democratic front of Albania, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha further on.

This congress, which took place in the atmosphere of enthusiastic approval of the policy of the Communist Party and its future program, amongst other things, solemnly demanded that the anti-fascist National Liberation Council and the provisional democratic government hold elections in free Albania for the constituent assembly, which would proclaim the will of the people on the form of the regime and approve the constitution of the country.

On the proposal of the government, the anti-fascist National Liberation Council approved this demand of the people, expressed through their organization, and charged a special commission with the task of drafting the laws on the elections to the constituent assembly. At the end of September the draft of these laws was presented to the meeting of the the ANLC for approval. The council declared its approval in principle of the elections and also discussed and approved the law on the elections and the law on the electoral lists. The latter proclaimed that all Albanian subjects, men and women, over 18 years of age, had the right to elect and be elected. The former Quisling ministers, war criminals and, of course, those who through their own fault had temporarily lost their political rights, were excluded from this right. Thus, for the first time in the history of Albania, real possibilities were created for the participation of all citizens in the elections.

I remember Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, that this law was approved without debate or opposition, even from those liberal bourgeois-democratic elements who had managed to penetrate into the council and the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council. I mention this because, from the information we had, as well as from the great pressure which the British and American representatives were exerting on us, we expected a great struggle with those elements who were now charged with the mission of going on the attack to sabotage the line of our party on the elections, of creating an opposition within or outside the front and manoeuvring by means of it to seize power in the future. Apparently, however, they had saved their renom for the law on the elections. Therefore, they received the law on electoral lists with smiles and even applause. Their faces looked sour only when I rose and sought an exception to the law.

I propose, I said, that an exception should be made for those who have still not reached the required age, but who have taken part in the ranks of the National Liberation Army. I think that it is fair to make this exception. Those boys and girls who have fought for freedom arms in hand, who, with full consciousness, have dedicated their young lives to the homeland, have the right to say with their vote what they have said with their vote what they have said with the rifle. They have all the maturity necessary to make their judgment on the fate of the people.

All present approved my proposal and after this we went on to discussion of the proposed law on the elections. Both for the preparation of this draft law and for the whole organization and crowning with success of the election campaign we had to do a great deal of work and preparation, not only because we were short of competent and experienced jurists, and none of us had any sort of experience on these matters in the past, but also because, in general, no tradition about elections had been created in our country in the past, especially for supreme organs such as the constituent assembly.

Hence, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, we had to create everything from scratch, usually basing ourselves on what we read from the classics of Marxism-Leninism, what we had been able to learn from the experience of the Soviet Union, and so on. Above all, we proceeded from the principle that we must formulate a draft law in which the people would be given the possibility and right to express their opinion and will as clearly, freely and directly as possible, that is, a law which would ensure all the guarantees for the normal and democratic development of this political activity of historic importance. The elections for the constituent assembly would be held on the basis of universal equal suffrage with direct secret ballot, and the law prohibited and condemned any kind of activity by anyone at all to violate these principles.

Further on Comrade Enver Hoxha writes in the book about the collaboration of the hostile elements of the peoples state power such as Riza Dani, Gjergj Kokoshi, Shefqet Beja etc with the English and American military missions. He writes about the arrival in Albania at the beginning of 1945 of Hodgson, head of British mission, who, apart from the official letter from Unrra that contained some small aid for Albania, demanded that the supplies from abroad be accompanied by a group of British soldiers and officers. In continuation of the talk with him, Comrade Enver Hoxha asks him sharply:

Why are these soldiers and officers coming?

To distribute the goods, naturally, wherever you allocate them.

Why, can't we distribute them ourselves? We are a state, we are a government.

It must be done in this way, replied the general, otherwise, the goods will not be supplied.

We do not refuse supplies from the allies, I told Hodgson, but we do not accept charity and you cannot impose conditions on us Comrade Enver Hoxha continues. We do not agree that any British soldier or officer should set foot on our land, or even in our port. Everything will be handed to our port authorities in the presence of people from your mission in Tirana and we will give you a receipt to show that we received this or that commodity. This is the only procedure acceptable to us. Accept it if you wish, otherwise we refuse the UNRRA goods.

The general, of course, was displeased, and went away saying with British phlegm: I shall inform my government.

A few days after the approval of the law on the elections to the constituent assembly, the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist council set the date of the elections, 2 December 1945, and appointed the central electoral commission. Thus, the election campaign began.

The Central Committee of the party writes Comrade Enver Hoxha further on issued special instructions on the organization of the political work, propaganda and agitation by the communists about the elections on 2 December, which were considered an event of historic importance for the fate of Albania. The

party orientated that the voting on 2 December should be turned into a great popular plebiscite in which the masses would clearly and openly express their opinion about the course on which our country would proceed. Through their vote, the men and women of Albania would say no to the bitter past of oppression and exploitation and affirm the brilliant road of socialism. At those moments the work of the party and its levers assumed an exceptional intensity: the press, the figurative agitation, the talks, the meetings and conferences, all had the aim of explaining to the masses why they should vote and what importance their votes had for the future of the homeland. At these meetings, rallies and conferences which were held everywhere in the context of the election campaign, the people responded to the appeal of the party and calls burst out everywhere:

A peoples republic. Let us vote a peoples republic.

The program proclaimed by the democratic front, which was the program of the party for those moments, conformed to the interests and the aspirations of the people. It was a realistic, revolutionary, concrete program which ensured the economic, political and social progress of the country. No other program was proclaimed to compete with it, because there could be no program more democratic than that of the front.

The fact that the call for a peoples republic was immediately embraced everywhere was the best answer that paralysed the desperate efforts of reaction, which did everything possible to alienate the masses from the front and from the elections, and the people gave it with their powerful voice. The efforts and combinations of the Anglo-Americans and their agents to create some sort of political opposition party or group totally failed. They were completely discredited, nobody followed them. So true was this that even when, on the eve of the elections, some element of the bourgeoisie wanted to present his candidature outside the list of the front, he was unable to do this, because he could not find even 10 or 15 people, let alone the 20 required by the law, to support his candidature.

The proclamation of elections to the constituent assembly Comrade Enver Hoxha continues was welcomed with enthusiasm everywhere in Albania and, as I said, in the meetings which were organized everywhere the people expressed their will to send their finest sons to the assembly. Apart from other things, such important events in the social and political life of that period as the congress of trade unions, the congress of youth, the proclamation of the program of the democratic front and so on, added to the enthusiasm and the liveliness of the election campaign and gave it a sounder content. These events created an unprecedented atmosphere of work, enthusiasm and mobilization everywhere.

Thus, 2 December 1945, the day of the elections, was turned into one of the greatest celebrations Albania had ever known. For the first time the people had the possibility to say their word effectively, to decide on their own fate. There was not the slightest doubt about the victory of the candidates of the democratic front. The list of the front found the approval of the masses everywhere, and this fact was so evident that reaction did not even attempt to organize itself and to come out with a list of its own.

After the announcement of the results of the elections, in which the democratic front scored an overwhelming victory, on behalf of the provisional democratic government I proposed to the Standing Committee of the anti-fascist National Liberation Council, that we should proceed with the summoning of the session of the constituent assembly. The Standing Committee of the ANLC set 10 January 1946 as the day when the proceedings of the assembly would commence, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha further on.

Right up till the set day the people everywhere, at rallies meetings and conferences, through telegrams and letters addressed to the ANLC, the government and the front, insistently demanded that the assembly should proclaim Albania a peoples republic. They called on their representatives in the supreme state organ to accomplish their mission and give the people the form of the regime which they desired and a truly democratic constitution.

A peoples republic, this was the only call which was heard from the great crowd which, on the morning of 10 January 1946, had filled the square in front of the building where the proceedings of the constituent assembly were to take place. It was a fine day which went marvellously well with the festive atmosphere which prevailed over the whole capital. During the whole of the first session that day and on the following day, the people stood in front of the building and listened to what was going on in the assembly through loud-speakers.

At 10 AM, the time announced as the opening of the session, a profound solemn silence reigned in the hall. After the members of the anti-fascist council and the government took their seats, Dr Omer Nishani, the chairman of the Standing Committee of the ANLC, was the first to take the floor and delivered a short speech in which he declared the first session of the assembly open.

I always remember with emotion that enthusiastic atmosphere which prevailed in the hall of the assembly when the telegrams were read from Korca, Berat, Durres, Pogradec and the whole of Albania, in which the people demanded the proclamation of the peoples republic, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes I remember as clearly as if it were today the moment when Hysni Kapo, a young man of 30 years, but with great experience as commissar, commander and leader of the party, rose to his feet and handed the chairman of the session the motion of the delegates of Vlora, who, after expressing the will of the valiant and revolutionary people whom they represented, proposed:

In the name of the deputies of Vlora, Albania should be proclaimed a peoples republic.

The hall and the square in the boulevard outside echoed with the cheers of the people. The cheering in the hall went on for several minutes and at one moment the chairman of the session called:

I propose to put the motion of the deputies of Vlore to the vote.

"There is no need to vote "came repeated calls from the hall and truly it was clear that the will of the people would be done, because they themselves and

their representatives have voted, rifles in hand, with bloodshed and sacrifices, for Albania to set out on the new road of freedom and progress. Nevertheless, however formal it may appear sometimes, order and procedure have to be respected, especially in such a supreme organ as the constituent assembly was.

The deputies voted and the official announcement was made immediately:

The constituent assembly, through unanimous vote and acclamation, has proclaimed Albania a peoples republic.

This announcement was accompanied with cheers, then spontaneously the deputies rose to their feet and sang the national anthem. Comrade Enver Hoxha writes we all had to struggle hard to control our emotions, but still here and there tears could be seen on the faces of those who had passed so many tests in the war with the enemy and under the threat of death. When we emerged from the hall a graver test awaited the deputies. The people surged around us, kissed and embraced us and, cheering, carried some of the deputies shoulder-high. The same enthusiasm prevailed everywhere in Albania. When the news was announced, people came out in the streets, singing and dancing. Perhaps for the first time after so many years the people gave themselves completely to rejoicing and forgot their suffering, Sacrifices and the many privations. A year before, 29 November 1944 had given them freedom. Today, 11 January 1946, gave them their peoples republic, the republic of workers and peasants.

Thus, the Albanian people, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses, under the leadership of their own party, achieved the objective of their war. They became masters of their own fate in the homeland freed of occupiers. No one donated these victories to them and our people had never taken anything from the hands of others, but everything had been achieved with struggle and work, with bravery and wisdom, with the rifle and the pen.

These great historic victories which now, de facto and de jure, had finally crowned a whole period of war and efforts, the great joy and enthusiasm of the people, and our determination to strengthen the peoples republic, which we had just created, and make it prosper could not but infuriate our internal and external enemies, both open and disguised. Their efforts and attempts to turn the wheel of history backwards burst out again and, in the course of these attempts, those elements of reaction like Riza Dani, Shefqet Beja and others, who had managed to be elected to the constituent assembly, went into action.

However, the attacks and venom of these elements, who wrongly and accidentally had managed to penetrate into the assembly, were unable to shake the will and determination of the people and their representatives even for a moment.

The victory of 2 December 1945 in the elections, that of 11 January 1946 with the proclamation of the republic, and a little later, the adoption of the constitution of the Peoples Republic of Albania, Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses put the final seal on the historic victories achieved and sanctioned the will of the people and our Communist Party about the future course and destiny of Albania.

With the proclamation of the republic and the adoption of the constitution, the process of the political organization of the order of peoples democracy, as a state of the dictatorship of the Proletariat, was completed. Now we had everything in our hands, in the hand of the party and the people, to continue and carry further the socialist revolution, to ceaselessly perfect and democratize the state, to steel the dictatorship of the Proletariat, to make the life of the people ever happier, more secure and more prosperous and to raise the honour and prestige of our peoples republic higher and higher.

[21 Nov 84]

[Text] Part VIII

Extracts from the book by Comrade Enver Hoxha "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania" we honour the outstanding work of our party and people during the years of the National Liberation War and over the 40 years of the construction of socialism.

--The Albanian people forge confidently ahead under the leadership of the party.

Tirana, 21 November (ATA)---The 8th broadcast, which is also the epilogue of Comrade Enver Hoxha's book "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania," speaks about the ceaseless strengthening and prospering of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania over the years of the people's power, under the leadership of the party with Comrade Enver Hoxha at the head, about the brilliant achievements in the socialist construction and the strengthening of the defence potential of the country, in irreconcilable and uncompromising struggle against the internal and external enemies. The Albanian people forge confidently ahead under the leadership of the party, while socialist Albania is strengthened with each passing day.

--The party has brought 40 years of victories to the people.

Years and decades have passed since those unforgettable days and now our country, writes Comrade Enver Hoxha further on in the book, our people's republic (today the People's Socialist Republic of Albania), has been ceaselessly strengthened, is prospering, and in each step radiates the joy, happiness and security of a fine, new life. This is the life of people free from any oppression or exploitation, the life of brave people, patriots and talented workers who, with lofty consciousness, with vigilance, with determination and uninterrupted efforts, have completely changed the appearance of the Albania of the past.

On the ruins and the miserable cottages which we found on 29 November 1944, towns and villages, new from every standpoint, have now risen. On the small blacksmiths and coppersmiths' shops a great modern industry of all branches has been built up and ceaselessly strengthened. Developed fertile fields extend over the former swamps and wasteland, the inexhaustible mental and creative forces of an entire people with schooling, culture and art have burst

out over the former backwardness and ignorance, with the party at the head, with the united forces of an entire people. Our socialist Albania has become both a great worksite of production and creation and an impregnable fortress of socialism.

Of course, all these things have been achieved through a great struggle, with ceaseless efforts and sacrifices in all directions, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes.

We did not find the road on which we proceeded strewn with rose petals, the obstacles, difficulties, ignorance and backwardness of the past haunted us at every step. And as if these were not enough, at each step the internal and external class enemies, the enemies of the peoples, progress and socialism, threatened us and did everything in their power to overthrow us. Any strengthening or success of ours hurt them, therefore, in their old and modern kitchens they were to cook up aggressions, blackmail, threats and blockades. But, vigilant and unwavering on our course, we were to foil all the plans and attempts of enemies and, through courage and cool-headedness, turn them all to dust and ashes.

From the moments when we formed our people's republic, when we had so many difficulties and problems to solve, a great danger threatened the future and the very existence of our country, the Yugoslav Titoites brought into action all their forces and savage means of blackmail and conspiracy, even preparations for military intervention, with the aim that the People's Republic of Albania should lose its separate existence and be turned into the 7th Republic of Yugoslavia. As to how we defeated their savage aims and plans, this has long been recorded in history. We had pledged ourselves to lead Albania forward, to make it a prosperous country and a fortress, and the party had taught us that we must never violate our decisions and pledges, must apply and defend them even at the cost of our lives. And Albania was saved.

The victory which we achieved over the plots and the interference of the Yugoslav revisionists gave us increased strength and determination to forge steadily ahead, in unity with the people, towards consolidation and new victories. We knew very well that what we had achieved was not our first and last victory. We were vigilant and prepared to face other sterner battles in defence of our republic and Marxism-Leninism. The Anglo-American imperialists and neighbouring chauvinists, as cunning as they were aggressive and unscrupulous in their anti-Albanian ambitions, set in motion all their networks of secret agents. They were to gather in their web all the dregs of reaction, gangs of saboteurs and criminals were to be sent in by sea, air and land to strangle our republic, but all of them were to meet their death, thanks to the vigilance of the people and the unwavering justice of the dictatorship of the Proletariat. Even later, the chorus of enemies would not give up its imperialist and chauvinist aims towards Albania, would not be brought to their senses by the ignominious defeats, but would continue to intrigue and plot to the detriment of the Albanian people. However, we were to reply to them always with the invincible strength which only the Marxist-Leninist truth and justice provides. They were to bark and howl like dogs, while our caravan forged steadily ahead, our republic grew steadily stronger and more and more each day gained the international prestige which it deserved.

--Albania--impregnable fortress.

Thus, Comrade Enver Hoxha continues, amidst encirclements and blockades, the Albanian people were to lay the foundations of socialism, strengthen the economy, improve the life of the working people, build gigantic projects, and never for one moment allow their vigilance to be blunted. At no time were our party and people to find themselves facing situations for which they were unprepared.

So, we continued our correct course and were never dismayed or even batted an eyelid in the face of the blockades and the threats of the Khrushchevites who, in their superpower greed, wanted to turn our people's republic into a vassal state, a part of the Russian empire. But the men had never been born who could bring the Albanians to their knees, and even less could this occur at a time when the Albanians had an heroic party, like our party of labour, at the head and were guided by a vanguard ideology, such as the Marxist-Leninist ideology. To make the peoples and genuine communists lethargic and put them to sleep, Khrushchev and company waved the withered olive-branch of "peaceful coexistence," while we replied to him and his followers by further strengthening the dictatorship of the Proletariat, that sharp sword of the working class, which would descend mercilessly on the head of any internal or external enemy. When they saw that they could not divert us from our course in "indirect" ways, with their capitulationist theories, "advice" and "orientations," they operated through pressures, threats, the submarines and starvation. We told them to their faces: We would rather eat grass than submit to you or anyone else. We shall remain where we are, on the shores of the Adriatic. And truly we are here and will always be here. Indomitable, convinced of the correctness of our course, proud of what we have achieved and determined to respond to any enemy or situation in the proper manner.

The 40 years of the people's state power Comrade Enver Hoxha stresses have convinced us that no harm can come to the People's Socialist Republic of Albania so long as the people and the party are linked together like flesh to bone. In this political and ideological unity, more unbreakable than any other unity that exists in the world, lies the explanation for and the basis of the great successes we have achieved in our peaceful constructive work, therein lies the source of the strength of our weighty and independent word in the international arena, therein lies the explanation for our courage and bravery in defence of the truth, the homeland, the peoples and socialism. On this unity between the party and the people, which has its foundations of blood and gunpowder, all those who wanted to split us and sow confusion in Albania, to make it a domain of foreigners, from the Koci Xoxes in the first years to the multiple agent of all years and all foreign patrons, Mehmet Shehu, have smashed their heads.

While building and defending our country, in clashes and difficulties we have become further tempered and strengthened and will never trample on what we have done. We shall raise the prosperity, security and reputation of our people's socialist republic higher and higher. Therefore, in the name of the bloodshed and toil, the sweat and privations, let us transmit to the coming generations the great message which history has taught us: We must always be

vigilant, always at work and on the attack to defend the victories achieved and carry them further forward. We must allow no one, whoever he may be, to violate and negate our immortal and sacred work, the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, let us strengthen it, share it, beautify it and hold it high as our ideal. In this way our fortress, socialist Albania, will be strengthened and rise even more majestically from generation to generation. Let our hearts beat always with its great heart.

And the greatest guarantee for this is the unity of the people around the party, the immortal teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and our party which was born from the bosom of the people to lead it only to victories.

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